

GIVE YOURSELF

POWER PLAY

SPECIAL EDITION #5

Goosebumps®

R.L. STINE

CHOOSE
FROM OVER
20 DIFFERENT
SCARY
ENDINGS!

WATCH
GOOSEBUMPS®
ON FOX
KIDS NETWORK

THE CURSE OF THE CAVE CREATURES

Reader Beware... You Choose the Scare!



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BEWARE!!
DO NOT READ THIS
BOOK FROM
BEGINNING TO END!

Whoops! You accidentally awakened an ancient cave spirit — and now it wants to add *you* to the collection of drawings on its cave wall!

Your only chance is to fight. You can become a hunter and track the evil spirit down. Or you can become a spellcaster and battle the spirit with magic. But be careful — this is going to be one tough fight!

Can the Flaming Arrow stop a fierce mountain lion? Will the Rain Spell defend you from a living skeleton? And what weapon could you *possibly* use against a squirming pitful of tarantulas and scorpions?

This scary adventure is about *you*. You decide what will happen — and how terrifying the scares will be!

Start on Page 1. Then follow the instructions at the bottom of each page. You make the choices. If you choose well, you'll beat the cave spirit. But if you make the wrong choice . . . BEWARE!

SO TAKE A DEEP BREATH. CROSS YOUR FINGERS. AND TURN TO PAGE 1 TO GIVE YOURSELF GOOSEBUMPS!

READER BEWARE —
YOU CHOOSE THE SCARE!

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R.L. STINE

GIVE YOURSELF

Goosebumps®

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SPECIAL EDITION #5

POWER PLAY:

**THE CURSE OF THE
CAVE CREATURES**

AN
APPLE
PAPERBACK

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“Let’s check out that cave!” You point to a dark hole high up in the wall of the canyon.

“No way!” your cousin Dennis replies. “I’m not going in there with some geeky little *squirt* like you.”

You sigh. You’re visiting Dennis and his family in the Arizona desert. So far it’s been a complete bust. Dennis is a year older than you — and a bully. The only reason he’s with you now is because he’s been grounded. So his mom insisted he spend time with you. Or else.

His little sister, Nancy, is always bugging you to play with her. But she’s only five. This whole vacation is a total drag. If you don’t do something fun soon, you’re going to drop dead from boredom!

“Well, *I’m* going to check out the cave,” you tell Dennis. “You can wait down here.”

You start up the rocky trail to the cave. Soon Dennis is a tiny dot down in the canyon below.

When you reach the cave, you find it blocked by a boulder. The rock looks as if it were put there deliberately to keep people out.

“I don’t believe it,” you grumble. “I climbed all the way up here for nothing!”

But maybe not. You bend down and press your shoulder against the rock. Slowly, slowly, the rock rolls away from the entrance.

You step inside the cave. You can’t believe what you see!

“Awesome,” you murmur. The walls are covered with paintings of animals. You recognize bears, wolves, and mountain lions. Squirrels, birds, and snakes. There are even caterpillars and butterflies.

You step deeper into the cave. You discover a big stone altar. A shiny bear skull sits on top of it. It looks as if it has been here for hundreds of years.

Your palms tingle as you pick up the skull. It feels warm and smooth. Almost as if it were alive. You bring it closer to your face, to take a better look.

Oh, no! The skull slips through your fingers. It drops to the floor of the cave.

CRACK! It shatters into a thousand pieces. A thick green fog pours out of the shattered skull. The fog fills the cave.

Terrifying howls echo around you. You shriek as ghostly animals appear in the fog. A mountain lion reaches out to claw you. A bear growls, flashing sharp teeth.

What is happening? Your heart thunders as you peer through the fog. It's so thick you can't see the exit. Or the walls.

The animal spirits draw closer. You're too terrified to move. A puma, a bear, and a coyote surround you.

“BEGONE, SPIRITS!” a voice booms. The thick green fog vanishes. The ghostly animals disappear with it.

Standing in front of you is an old man with a long white beard. He wears a loincloth. Necklaces of animal bones and teeth hang around his neck. Red and blue feathers sprout from his leather cap.

“Who are you?” you gasp.

“I am the shaman of the Bear Skull,” he declares. “You broke the magic skull. You have released the Cave Spirit!”

Magic? Cave Spirit? You feel your mouth go dry. Your palms grow clammy. “What is the Cave Spirit?” you ask. This is way too weird.

“He is a very ancient ghost,” the shaman explains. “He represents the darkest of animal natures. Now he has your scent. He will hunt you down. To add you to his art collection on the wall.”

You glance at the drawings. Now you notice that some of the pictures are of humans.

No. The shaman can’t mean . . . “Are you saying that if the spirit gets me I become a picture?” you demand. Your mind reels. This is impossible!

“That is correct,” the shaman replies. “And you will hang on a cave wall — forever.”

“No!” you cry. “It’s not fair! I didn’t mean to drop the skull!”

The shaman narrows his eyes at you. “There is one way out.”

To find out what it is, turn to PAGE 4.

“There is only one way to escape the Cave Spirit,” the shaman declares. “And that is to face him in battle. To do so, you must be transformed into a worthy opponent.”

“What do you mean?” you ask. “How?”

“First you must decide how you will confront the Cave Spirit,” the shaman tells you. “You may choose to become a hunter and hunt him down. In that case, the spirit will appear as an animal. But you will need to be very careful. All animals — even pictures of animals — can be dangerous to you.”

You shudder. That sounds scary. “What’s the other way?” you ask.

“You may become a spellcaster,” the shaman replies, “and use magic to battle the Cave Spirit’s powers. But this way is dangerous too. Magic can be unpredictable.”

You can’t believe this is happening. How can you choose? Your heart is pounding so hard you can hardly think!

“You will be allowed to take four tools with you,” the shaman goes on. “If you become a hunter, your tools are weapons. If you become a spellcaster, they are magical spells. Think about it very carefully. Then tell me which form you will take.”

To be transformed into a hunter, turn to PAGE 5.

To become a spellcaster, go to PAGE 66.

You decide you'll feel safer facing the Cave Spirit if you have weapons. "I choose to become a hunter," you tell the shaman.

"Very well," the old man replies. He hands you a shiny sword. "The Seeker's Sword will temporarily stun any enemy. But you must touch your opponent's skin with the weapon's point.

"You may also choose three other weapons. Each weapon has its strengths — and its dangers." The shaman snaps his fingers. An opening appears in the cave wall. Inside, four weapons gleam.

"This is the Ice Rifle," the shaman tells you, pointing to a long gun. "It will freeze solid anything you shoot at. But remember — it will freeze anything its bullets touch. There are only five bullets. Use them wisely."

The shaman waves at a glowing golden weapon. "The Flaming Arrow will set anything on fire. You must be very careful where you use it. And you may only use it once."

The shaman points to a long, slender spear. "This is the Singing Spear," he tells you. "It is drawn to your enemy. But it may not work against all creatures.

"The final weapon choice is the Sticky Net," the shaman concludes. "It will ensnare any attacker. But the enemy may still be able to fight."

Examine the weapons, hunter. Choose three, then go to PAGE 6.

“I have chosen,” you tell the shaman.

Using a pencil, write your weapon choices here. If you have chosen the Flaming Arrow, cross it off when you have used it. If you have chosen the Ice Rifle, make a mark next to it for each bullet you use. When you’ve used up all five bullets, cross the rifle off your list.

If you lose any of your weapons, you will need to cross it off.

WEAPONS:

1. Seeker’s Sword

2.

3.

4.

“You have chosen well,” the shaman tells you. He waves his arms over his head. The cave fills with thick red smoke. You feel a strange tingling all over your body. Then — *POOF!* The shaman and the smoke disappear. You are alone in the cave — with four weapons hanging from your belt.

“Wait!” you cry. “I have so many questions! How will I know where to find the Cave Spirit? What does it look like? Help me!”

You are greeted only with silence.

You’re on your own, hunter.

You can hardly believe what has happened.

All I wanted to do was explore, you think. Not battle an ancient ghost!

But you know you have no choice. You know that if you don't hunt the Cave Spirit, he will destroy you.

Might as well get started.

You exit the cave and blink in the bright morning sunlight. Maybe you should hunt for the Cave Spirit farther up the mountain trail. Or maybe you'll find the Cave Spirit down below. On more familiar ground.

Will you go back down the mountain? Turn to PAGE 54.

Or continue up the mountain trail? Go to PAGE 27.

You're so surprised, it takes you a moment to react. You lash out at the bird. The bird beats its wings against you.

"Hey!" you yell. "Cut that out!"

The bird ignores you. It grabs your shirt in its strong beak and pulls you toward the edge of the cliff.

"No!" you scream. "Help!"

But there is no one to help you. You reach for your sword.

Too late! The bird drops you over the side of the cliff.

As you fall toward the bottom, the shaman's warning flashes through your head: *Beware all animals.*

Now you remember. Birds are animals too.

It appears that the Cave Spirit has already won.

The bottom of the canyon rushes up at you. Alas, hunter, you've FALLEN — right into the Cave Spirit's evil trap.

THE END

“What happened?” you cry.

“The key broke,” the sheriff replies. “I warned the Cave Spirit it was getting rusty. I’m sorry, you’ll just have to wait until the spirit arrives.”

Oh, no! you think. “How long until the Cave Spirit gets here?” you ask.

“He shows up once every hundred years or so,” the sheriff replies.

You gulp. “When was the last time he was here?”

“About ten years ago,” the sheriff says. “So it shouldn’t be more than another ninety or so years.”

Oh, well, look at it this way. You have plenty of time to try to come up with another plan. Besides, by the time the Cave Spirit shows up, you’ll be a ghost. So you won’t be trespassing anymore!

THE END

The fuzzy green stuffed animal is gone. You stare at an enormous snake. The toy must have been transformed by the Cave Spirit!

The snake is as thick as your whole body. You can't even tell how long it is. But its twisting coils fill the bathtub.

It opens its mouth wide. "*HISSSSSSSS!*"

You gasp. Its mouth is as big as your head. Its pointed fangs are at least two inches long.

The snake slithers toward you. Its long, forked tongue flicks in the air, sensing you.

"*HISSSSSSSS!*"

It's about to strike!

Quick! Choose a weapon.

There's not much room in the bathroom. You can't really aim the rifle, arrow, or spear. But maybe the Sticky Net could stop the snake. Did you bring it? Or, you might be able to fight the snake with the Seeker's Sword.

Use the Sticky Net on PAGE 31.

Or try the Seeker's Sword on PAGE 23.

You reach in your pocket and grab the tiny skull talisman for your spell. “Small, small!” you cry.

The skeleton keeps moving toward you. But it also starts to shrink!

“Be my pal!” the skeleton moans. But its voice is no longer scary and commanding. Instead it’s a tiny squeak.

The skeleton only comes up to your ankles. Its head is the size of a walnut. Its arms are like toothpicks.

“Get out of my way!” you shout. You feel big and powerful. You kick the tiny skeleton. It flies apart. Its bones scatter all over the room. They break into tiny pieces.

Your hand begins to tingle. You glance down. The muscles and skin are growing back. Soon your hand is normal again.

You sigh in relief. You’ve defeated the Cave Spirit — for now.

Before you have a chance to think what to do next, the door to your room bangs open and Dennis bursts in.

“There you are!” he exclaims. “If you won’t go swimming with me, I’ll make you sorry you ever came here.”

“Forget it!” you exclaim. You grip the blazing wand tighter. You wave it at the sorceress.

“Stop it!” she shouts. “You’re going to ruin the Magic Circle!”

Thanks for the hint! you think. You wave the wand over the circle. The line on the ground blazes up, then disappears. You’re free!

“No!” the sorceress shrieks. Her face twists in horror. She turns to run. But before she takes a step, you touch her with the burning wand.

Her black clothes burst into flames. She screams in agony. And then with a *POOF!* she disappears.

You gasp. In her place swirls a towering whirlwind. Made of fire!

It snaps and crackles in front of you. The heat is so strong you have to move back. Your hand shakes as you grip your flaming wand.

A face appears inside the whirlwind, with burning yellow eyes and a black charcoal mouth. The mouth opens and begins to speak.

Desperately, you summon all your strength. With a grunt, you twist the sword around. You don't have the energy to thrust. All you can do is lay the point on the snake's skin.

A bright flash of orange lights up the bathroom!

"*HISSS!*" The snake flies backwards. Then lies motionless.

You collapse to the bathroom floor. For a moment all you do is catch your breath. But then — the snake begins coiling again!

It didn't stay stunned for very long!

You grab the sword. You hold it in both hands and face the snake. The snake glares at you with its beady black eyes. You aim the point directly at the snake's head.

"*HISSSSSSSSS!*" The snake wriggles away, trying to escape.

You can't believe what it does next!

Inside the papery coverings on the trees are people! Wrapped up and sleeping. “Those — those are cocoons, aren’t they?” you ask.

“Of course!” The butterfly queen flutters her wings. “Soon they will be gorgeous butterflies like me. And soon *you* will be too.”

“No!” you exclaim. “I don’t want to be a butterfly!”

“I felt that way at first,” the queen admits. “But don’t worry, you’ll change your mind.”

You turn when you hear a rustling sound. You gasp.

Hundreds of hairy brown caterpillars are crawling toward you.

You run, but more caterpillars are coming from the other direction. You’re surrounded!

You try to kick the caterpillars away, but there are too many of them. They crawl up your legs. You brush them off. But more appear.

Everywhere a caterpillar touches you, it leaves sticky silk strands. Caterpillars drop out of the trees, landing on your head and your shoulders. You can feel your whole body becoming covered with gross, sticky thread.

Soon, you’re tied up tightly in white goo. You can’t open your eyes. And you’re feeling very sleepy.

Sweet dreams, spellcaster. For now, this adventure is all wrapped up!

THE END

The attic is dark and cluttered. Cardboard boxes are stacked in piles. Old clothes hang on an iron rail. In one corner sit a couple of garbage cans. In another corner is a jumble of broken tools and toys. On top of a three-legged table you see the stuffed head of a mountain lion.

Uh-oh.

It's just a stuffed head, you tell yourself, staring at it.

The head stares back.

Its yellow eyes blink.

You scream.

The sheriff snores away. You hold the key talisman in your hand. Then you whisper the words for the Magic Key spell: "Open sesame."

You hear a creaking noise. Then the door to the cell pops open.

The spell worked! You're free!

But you're still in plenty of danger. You are far from home. The Cave Spirit is still after you. And if you don't get out of this ghost town before the sheriff wakes up, he'll throw you right back into jail.

You hurry outside. You take another sip of water from the well, then set out across the desert again.

After a few moments you notice a figure up ahead. Could it be the Cave Spirit? You cautiously draw closer. You discover the figure is a man dressed in khaki. He bends over a cactus, studying it with a magnifying glass.

He doesn't look like a magical being.

"Hello!" you call.

He straightens up and peers at you through his thick glasses. He has a long beard and very messy hair. "Hello!" he replies with a big smile. "I've been waiting for you!"

Huh?

Terror shoots through you. None of your spells will work inside the Magic Circle. You are completely powerless. Unless . . .

You thrust the wand into the campfire. The tip blazes up.

“OOMA . . . GOOMA . . .” the sorceress intones. She’s started the spell! She’s going to turn you into a frog! Your heart pounds so hard you wonder if she can hear it.

You lunge at her with the flaming wand. The sorceress jumps back with a shriek.

“What are you doing?” she demands. “Put that thing out!”

She seems afraid! Your heart beats faster — this time, with hope! “Let me go!” you reply. Your hand shakes, but you wave the burning wand at her.

“No!” she shouts. “Now put out that fire!”

Seeing her cower makes you feel braver. “If you’re so powerful, put the fire out yourself!” you taunt.

“I can’t,” she admits. Her voice trembles. “I can’t go near fire. But if you’ll put it out, I promise I won’t change you into a frog. And sorceresses can’t break promises. It’s another rule.”

Hmmm, You’ve heard that before. Maybe you can trust her. . . .

Put out the fire on PAGE 80.

Hold on to the burning wand and turn to PAGE 12.

You scan the room for a way out. You have no time to grab your spear, so you'll have to cross it off your list on PAGE 6. You spot a small window at one end of the room. Keeping your eye on the big cat, you back away from the mirror.

The lion continues to growl at its reflection.

You cross to the window and open it. You glance out. It's a long way to the ground. But there's a big maple tree next to the house. A sturdy branch reaches only a few inches from the window. Can you make it to the tree?

You hear a loud growl. You glance over your shoulder.

Uh-oh. The mountain lion has finally figured out that its reflection in the mirror is not another lion.

The animal stares at you with glowing yellow eyes. It licks its chops. It crouches to spring.

It's now or never. You climb up onto the windowsill. Then you reach out toward the branch. It's too far. You'll have to jump.

The mountain lion leaps.

So do you.

You pull the watch talisman out of your pocket. You feel a prickly sensation on your foot. You glance down to see a hairy tarantula crawling up your leg.

“Gross!” You shudder and kick the bug away. Then you press the stem on the tiny watch. “Stop time!” you shout.

You wait.

Nothing happens.

You glance down. Dozens of hairy tarantulas and fierce scorpions are gathered around your feet. But they aren’t moving.

You peer straight up. Dr. Comstock stares down at you. His eyes are wide open. They don’t blink.

It worked! you realize. Time has stopped — for now. But you don’t know how long the spell will last. Better get busy.

You stomp on the tarantulas and scorpions. *CRACK! SPLUSH!* The sound makes you wince. You feel their bodies crush beneath your feet. Soon the bottoms of your shoes are covered with splattered insect parts.

Still, you keep stomping. Finally, all the tarantulas and scorpions lie dead at the bottom of the sand pit.

There’s just one problem.

CRACK! CREESH! CRICKLE!

Your bullets lodge in the floor. A thick layer of ice spreads across the attic. The attic becomes as cold and slick as an ice-skating rink!

“GRRRRRRRRRR.”

You glance up to see the lion circling toward you. Its sharp claws sink into the ice as it crouches to spring.

You grab for the rifle. It skitters away on the slick ice. You scramble to your feet. But your sneakers slip and you fall — hard!

You’re doomed! Unless . . . You have one weapon left. Which is it?

Did you bring the Flaming Arrow? Maybe you can melt the ice.

Or maybe your other weapon will bring down the lion.

Shoot the arrow on PAGE 58.

Use another weapon on PAGE 129.

The howl grows even louder. It sounds like a thousand jet engines. You realize you are staring at a powerful dust storm. Speeding toward you.

You glance around for a place to hide. But the desert is flat. There's nothing bigger than a cactus out here. And you can't hide in a cactus.

The fierce, shrieking wind surrounds you. Sharp particles of sand whip against your skin. You feel as if they will scrub your skin off your body.

You curl up in a ball on the ground. The fierce wind pummels you. It rolls you along the ground. You bang into rocks and cactuses.

The wind roars even louder. The storm is growing stronger!

You open your eyes to slits. You gaze around. You think you see something moving toward you through the thick, blowing sand.

What is it? Can it help you? Or are you in even greater danger?

The puzzle tells you that the pterosaur has changed into a boat.

Sorry, hunter. That's wrong!

The pterosaur stares down at you. It can't believe you made such a silly mistake.

Dinosaurs don't like mistakes.

But it likes you. That is, it likes the way you smell. And it's positive it will like the way you taste.

It opens its mouth to find out.

There's nowhere to run. For you, the hunt is over.

But cheer up. The pterosaur may think you're dumb. But at least it knows you have good taste.

THE END

The snake prepares to strike.

You pull the Seeker's Sword out of your belt. You thrust it at the snake.

The snake ducks away. Then it lunges at you.

You jump back just in time. You feel its scaly skin brush your arm. You grasp the sword in both of your hands and swing again.

The snake twists out of your way. *CLANK!* You hit the side of the bathtub. The snake climbs up on the shower rod. You start to swing your sword over your head —

“Aaagghh!” The snake drops onto your shoulders. It winds around your body.

“Help!” you cry. “He —” The snake cuts you off — by squeezing your neck! You can't breathe. You feel yourself go numb all over. Black spots begin to appear before your eyes.

Now you remember the shaman's instructions. You need to touch your enemy's skin with the *point* of the sword. But is it too late? Do you have enough strength left?

Your eyes widen. You don't believe it.

Swimming toward the log...is the mountain lion from the attic!

The beast turns its fierce yellow eyes on you. You glance around for a way to escape. But where could you go? You're surrounded by water. Powerful, churning water.

"GROOOOWR!" the mountain lion cries. But it doesn't sound angry. You peer at it. It looks tired and scared.

"GROWWWR!" It paddles closer to you. It places one of its huge paws on the log.

SPLASH! The swift current sweeps the creature back into the river.

It struggles to break through the surface of the raging water. You can tell it's getting weaker.

Should you help the mountain lion onto your log?

If you help the mountain lion on, turn to PAGE 101.

If you don't let the mountain lion on, turn to PAGE 117.

You hurl the free edge of the net at the lion.

Yes! The net lands on the lion's head. One end drapes over the creature. The other end still clings to the doorknob.

The lion shakes its head. It backs up, trying to crawl out of the net. It scrapes at the net with its claws. They stick!

You hear a loud creaking sound. The attic door! You see it straining against the lion's tremendous power. As the struggling creature fights the net, it yanks the door right off the hinges!

Then, as if giving up, the lion sits. You watch in astonishment as the huge, powerful beast changes back into a stuffed head.

You stare at the beat-up, dusty old thing. You step over and carefully, cautiously, retrieve the net.

You dash out the door, in search of Dennis. And your sword.

The log picks up speed. It hurtles through the raging water toward the falls. You're only three feet away from a gruesome end.

No way you can get out of this one, hunter!

Until — the mountain lion growls. It grabs your shirt in its mouth. Then, just as the log plunges into the waterfall, the lion leaps to the riverbank. You dangle from its powerful jaws.

You feel your shirt start to rip. But the lion sets you down on solid ground. You're safe.

You gaze at the falls. You shudder as you see the high, jagged rocks far below. That was close!

"Thanks," you tell the mountain lion.

"Groor," it answers.

You lie on the riverbank catching your breath. When you feel stronger, you start walking in the direction that you hope will lead home.

The lion leaps in front of you.

"Sorry," you say. "Got to go." You push the mountain lion aside. Again, you try to head for home.

The lion growls. Then it clamps its jaws around your arm.

You decide to continue up the mountain trail. The three weapons on your belt make you feel powerful. You keep your hand on the Seeker's Sword. It gleams in the bright sunlight.

"Hello, spirit!" you call out. "I'm here — ready to fight."

All you hear is a bird singing in the distance.

The trail becomes narrower and steeper. You wonder where it leads. Up ahead, the sound of bird songs grows even louder.

You hike around a curve and stop. Your eyes widen in amazement.

Blocking your path is the biggest bird you've ever seen! It is bigger than a hawk or an eagle. It's as big as a cow! Its feathers are shiny black, like a crow's.

It stops singing and stares at you.

"Go on, bird, fly away," you tell it. "I'm hunting the Cave Spirit. I need to get by."

The bird hops toward you.

"Shoo!" you tell the bird.

The bird flaps its wings, then flies straight into your face.

The Fire Spirit towers above you. You feel your hair and eyebrows beginning to burn. You must use the spell immediately!

You grab the sponge from your pocket and shout: "Wet all over!"

A boom of thunder shakes the ground.

"No!" the Fire Spirit shouts. "No!"

A bright flash of lightning nearly blinds you. A second later a torrent of rain falls from the sky. The Fire Spirit spins and whirls, trying to get away. But the water pours all over it.

The whirlwind of fire begins to shrink. Then, with a final hiss and sputtering smoke, it disappears completely.

You glance around. All the fires are out. The woods are soaked with water. The animals and birds begin to return.

You're safe — for now. But where are you? You climb to a large rock and gaze down. Far below you see the desert. A trail leads down.

You sigh, then head down the trail.

You gaze around in confusion. You're inside a deep canyon. The canyon walls are so steep they seem to go straight up. Above you, near the top of a rocky cliff, you see water dripping from a small hole.

You realize that you must have dropped out of the hole. "Where am I?" you gasp.

"We call it the Lost Land," the man in khaki explains. "I'm Professor Greenwell. We are members of a scientific expedition. We were caught in a flood a hundred years ago. We ended up here."

You stare at the professor. He doesn't look that old. In fact, he looks about the same age as your parents.

"Are you saying you're over a hundred years old?" you ask.

"Time doesn't move forward in this place," he tells you. "We're frozen at the ages we were when we became trapped here."

"Trapped?" you ask, your heart sinking.

"There are only two exits to the outside world," the professor tells you. "There's the way you came in —" he points to the hole in the cliff — "but it's impossible to reach. The other exit is far too dangerous to use —"

The professor's words are cut off by an angry roar. A huge shadow falls across the ground.

You open the Sticky Net. You don't even aim — you just throw it. You shut your eyes, waiting for the crash.

BOIIINNGGGGGG!

Your whole body jerks violently. You stop falling. You bounce a few times.

You open your eyes. Your nose is inches from the ground.

It worked! You glance up. One end of the Sticky Net clings to the end of the pterosaur's long tail. The other is still attached to your belt. It worked like a bungee cord to stop your fall.

You take deep breaths. You feel your heart rate return to normal.

You hear a surprising sound. The crowd of people are all laughing and clapping.

"That was great!" a red-haired boy shouts. "Do it again!"

Huh? "B-b-b-but —" you stammer.

"CAWWWWWWWWKKKKK!" the pterosaur cries. You peer up. Its fierce face seems twisted. In shock, you realize it is *smiling*.

The pterosaur swoops down and grabs you in its claws. It flies back up to the top of the tree. Then it pops you back into its mouth!

The snake oozes out of the bathtub toward you.

Your hands shake, but you know what you have to do. You pull the Sticky Net out of your belt and throw it at the snake.

Uh-oh. The net is too big for such a small space. You can feel your skin sticking to it.

“No!” you scream. “No!” You struggle to get free of the net. You feel it tangle in your arms and legs. The snake slithers toward you.

You yank your hand away. The net clings to your wrist. You tug harder. The net glues your arm to your leg. It plasters your other arm to your hair. You try to yank your head away and it sticks to your shoulder.

In a moment you’re twisted up like a pretzel. Your body is stuck together in fifteen different places.

“Help!” you yell again.

The snake winds around you. You can’t get away. You can’t even move.

Now the snake opens its mouth wider — to swallow you.

Too bad. This situation has become much too sticky — even for a brave hunter like you.

THE END

You grab the Avenger's Axe. It is heavier than you expected. But you know your hunter's power will give you the strength to use it.

The mastodon roars again. Even the nearby trees shake. You notice that your knees are shaking too. You take a deep breath. You must defeat the mastodon. If you don't, you may never leave the Lost Land.

The scientists take cover behind the rocks. You step out and face the mastodon.

It glares at you with small red eyes. It lifts its trunk and trumpets. You gasp at the deafening sound.

It steps toward you. Its long, twisting trunk reaches out. . . .

You raise the axe. You swing it over your head.

"Ooof!" you grunt as the beast's trunk wraps around your waist. It lifts you off the ground.

You release the axe.

You keep your eyes locked on the mountain lion.
You grip the edge of the Sticky Net.

“Grrrrrrr.” A low growl rumbles deep in the lion’s throat.

You cock your arm back, back, back . . . and throw!

“Yah!” You’re jerked backwards, hard. You fall onto the floor.

What happened?

Oh, no! The Sticky Net stuck on the doorknob behind you!

You scramble to your feet. You tug, but the net clings to the door. And the lion is about to pounce!

You stare at the sorceress in shock. Then you remember that a sorceress is a magical being. Quickly, you say one of your spells.

Nothing happens.

“Thought you could outsmart me, didn’t you?” She laughs. “But you are standing inside the Magic Circle. No spells work inside the circle.”

Then I’ll get out of this stupid circle, you think. You dash away from the fire. *WHAM!* You bang into an invisible barrier. You stumble backwards from the force of the impact.

“Let me go!” you demand. You rub your head where you hit it on the barrier. “I never did anything to hurt you!”

“You are an enemy of the Cave Spirit,” the sorceress explains. “I will turn you into a frog and give you to him. He promised me a reward.”

The sorceress raises her hands. “Now don’t make a fuss,” she adds. “It will be over in just a minute. You’ll like being a frog.”

Somehow, you don’t think so.

But what can you do? You’re trapped inside the Magic Circle.

Maybe the magic of the Wizard’s Wand is strong enough to work inside the sorceress’s circle. Or maybe you should set the wand on fire and use it as a weapon.

See if the wand works on PAGE 78.

Set the wand on fire on PAGE 17.

"I defeated the mastodon!" you shout happily.

"Well, yes," Professor Greenwell admits, stepping out from behind the rocks. "But it's not all good news."

"What do you mean?" you demand. You watch dust rise from the huge mound of rocks covering the mastodon.

"Well, unfortunately, when the mastodon ran into the cliff, it was heading for its cave," the professor explains.

"So?"

"Its cave was the other exit to the outside world."

"What?" you gasp. "You mean —"

"The exit is buried now. Under tons of rubble. I doubt we could dig it out in a thousand years. But you'll like it here," he goes on with a warm smile. "The weather's good and we have all the worms and berries we can eat."

THE END

You grip the rough bark of the nearest branch. You swing your body into the tree. For a moment you dangle far above the ground. Then you feel your feet land on a solid branch. Made it!

You glance back at the attic window. The mountain lion crouches on the windowsill.

But it doesn't leap. Instead, it lets out a strange squeak.

Your eyes widen in amazement. The lion starts shrinking!

Its legs pull back into its body. Its body shrivels. Down to nothing.

The last thing to vanish is its tail. All that remains is the stuffed lion's head, now lying on the windowsill.

You shudder. Watching the transformation gives you the creeps. You wonder what the Cave Spirit will send your way next.

Well, you'd better get your sword back before the spirit does anything! You shinny down the tree and drop to the ground.

You scan the park across the street. You think you spot Dennis. You head toward the park.

Then you hear an angry growl behind you.

You're almost too afraid to glance back. But you have to. You know the Cave Spirit has sent another beast for you to fight. Your head whips around.

A huge, angry-looking Doberman glares at you.

You need your sword! You dash away, darting in and out of crowds of kids.

You spot Dennis sitting on the grass several yards ahead. He has your sword in his belt.

"Dennis!" you yell.

He glances up. He scowls when he sees you. "What?" he shouts.

"I need my sword!"

"Come get it!" he taunts.

What a jerk!

You hear the Doberman growl. It's gaining on you! It snaps at you, grazing the back of your shirt! You put on a burst of speed. But you know you'll never reach Dennis before the Doberman turns you into dog food.

What weapon can you use to fight the beast?

If you have the Singing Spear and want to use it, turn to PAGE 79.

If you have the Flaming Arrow and would like to use it, turn to PAGE 115.

To use any other weapon, turn to PAGE 40.

The ghostly sheriff drags you along the sandy street. You kick and scream, but the sheriff ignores you. His strength is amazing.

He pulls you inside a beat-up building labeled JAIL. He throws you into a small cell with iron bars on the door.

“No!” you cry.

The sheriff slams the door. You hear a *CLICK!* as he locks it.

“Let me out!” you demand.

“Sorry,” the sheriff tells you, “but the law’s the law. Maybe the Cave Spirit will let you out.”

“Th-th-the Cave Spirit?” you stammer.

“Right,” the sheriff replies. “This is his town.”

That remark stuns you into silence. You are in big trouble now! Trapped behind bars. A sitting duck for the ancient spirit.

“You can’t keep me here!” you exclaim. “I have magical powers.”

“You mean that wand?” The sheriff laughs. “Magic spells don’t work on ghosts, didn’t you know that? No, kid,” he adds as he sits in a battered wooden chair, “you’re not going anywhere.” He puts his feet on the desk and falls asleep.

Did you bring the Magic Key with you? If so, use it to open the lock. If not, you’ll have to try to outwit the sheriff when he wakes up.

Use the Magic Key on PAGE 16.

Or outwit the sheriff on PAGE 90.

“You have made a terrible mistake!” the Cave Spirit booms. “And now I will add you to my collection of cave art.”

“No!” you shout. “Wait! I’ll do the challenges, I’ll —”

“You had your chance!” he exclaims. He waves his hands again.

Everything goes black.

When you open your eyes, you can’t figure out where you are. You’re up high somewhere, gazing down into the darkness. On either side of you are pictures of animals: mountain lions, coyotes, bears, rabbits.

A light moves toward you. You glance down. The shaman is back! He carries a flickering torch.

“Nice new drawing,” he comments.

You turn your head to see the drawing, but your head won’t move. You seem to be paralyzed!

The shaman continues to gaze upward at the new drawing. Suddenly, you realize he’s staring at *you*. You *are* the new drawing!

The Cave Spirit has won! You’ve become a drawing on the wall of his cave.

THE END

You grab your weapon.

But the Doberman is too fast. With a terrifying growl, the dog attacks. It knocks your weapon out of your hands!

“No!” you scream, scrambling away.

But the dog backs off. It seems to lose interest in you. It sniffs the weapon lying on the ground. You realize it is puzzled by the magical smell.

That gives you the break you need. You jump to your feet and race to your cousin. Dennis cowers behind a tree. He must have been watching you and the dog.

“Give me that!” you demand. You snatch the sword from him.

“Hey!” Dennis complains.

You ignore him. You whirl around to face the Doberman.

The dog lunges at you. You strike out with the sword. Its tip hits the dog on the nose.

Instantly, the Doberman falls to the grass, whining. A moment later it jumps up and dashes away, its tail between its legs.

You collapse onto the grass. Relief, fear, and exhaustion wash over you. You shut your eyes.

“You’re going to be sorry you did that!” a voice warns.

You enter the town. Old, mud-brick buildings line the main street. The buildings all look deserted. A tumbleweed blows past you.

“Hello?” you call. “Is anyone here?” Your only answer is a mournful echo. It gives you the creeps.

You decide to take a moment to rest. You sit by the well and close your eyes. When you open them, a very pale man wearing a badge is standing over you.

You jump up. How did he sneak up on you like that?

“I’m the sheriff here,” he tells you. “And you’re trespassing. This town is for ghosts.”

“Ghosts?” You feel your mouth go dry again. “You mean you’re — ”

“That’s right, I’m a ghost,” he replies. “And no one can stay here who isn’t one.”

“Well, I don’t want to be a ghost!” you exclaim. You start to back away. “Don’t worry. I was just leaving.”

“No!” the sheriff says. “You trespassed. You must pay a fine.”

“A fine?” you gasp. “Are you serious? I don’t have any money.”

The sheriff grabs your arm with icy fingers. “In that case, I’ll have to throw you in jail,” he snarls. “Now come with me.”

You aim the Flaming Arrow carefully . . . carefully . . .

Then you let it fly!

It hits the pterosaur's leathery wing, bounces off, and falls to the ground. The grass bursts into flame. The pterosaur steps onto the small fire, easily stamping it out.

You heart thuds. What went wrong?

Then you figure it out — the dinosaur's skin is so thick the arrow couldn't pierce it.

You have to aim the arrow at its face or body where the skin is softer. Then the arrow will work!

You should have thought of that before, hunter. Because you don't have a second chance.

Remember? You can only use the arrow once!

The pterosaur is so close you can smell its horrible breath.

Tough luck — because this is . . .

THE END.

The pterosaur soars above the sand. Far, far below you can see green cactus and gray sagebrush. The purple mountains look like tiny hills. Canyons resemble lines drawn in the sand with sticks.

Soon the city vanishes into the distance. You peer through the dinosaur's claws. All you can see in every direction are sand and cactuses. The distant purple mountains draw closer. A canyon appears up ahead.

The pterosaur heads for a ledge high on the canyon wall. It sets you down gently on the ledge, next to the opening of a cave.

You are so terrified, your legs can't hold you up. You sit and stare up at the fierce creature.

"CAWWWWWWK!" the pterosaur cries. It flaps its wings, creating a powerful breeze. Your eyes widen in astonishment.

The pterosaur is transforming. It's growing smaller.

What is going on? What is the pterosaur changing into?

“Dinosaur crackers!” Nancy exclaims with a smile. “You never saw them before?” She holds up the box for you to see. “They’re my favorite.”

With a shudder, you remember the shaman’s warning. All animals can be dangerous — even toys and pictures. You’re willing to bet that includes Nancy’s cookies.

“Stop!” you cry. “Don’t open that, Nancy!”

“Why not?” She opens the box. “They’re really good.” She pulls out a cookie.

The instant it hits the air, the cookie morphs into a winged pterosaur!

Nancy screams. She drops the dinosaur cookie and races away.

You wish you could run after her, but you can’t. You know this is your next battle.

At first the cookie-creature is tiny. But it grows rapidly. Soon it’s as tall as a tree!

You stare at the winged creature in horror. The pterosaur opens its gigantic mouth and lets out a deafening caw.

Choose one of your weapons — now!

If you use the Ice Rifle, turn to PAGE 85.

If you use the Singing Spear, turn to PAGE 106.

If you use the Sticky Net or Seeker’s Sword, turn to PAGE 61.

If you use the Flaming Arrow, turn to PAGE 42.

The creature approaching through the sand is a camel. As soon as it gets close enough, you grab one of its legs. The camel kneels down in the howling sandstorm. You curl up next to it. Its warm, furry body protects you from the blowing dust.

A moment later, the storm stops. The sky becomes bright blue again. With a *POOF!* the camel disappears.

In its place stands the Cave Spirit.

“You were very clever, that time,” the Cave Spirit compliments you. “But the next challenge will not be so easy. It is a test of your magical ability.”

Quickly, you review the spells you know. You’re sure they aren’t as powerful as the Cave Spirit’s own magic. But you will do your best.

“I’m ready,” you announce nervously.

Your brontosaurus hates the sound of the Singing Spear too! It twists its long neck. It rears up and bucks you off.

You land hard on the ground. You take a moment to catch your breath. You sit up. To your amazement the Singing Spear returns to your hand. Like a boomerang.

The moment it stops whining, the dinosaurs both calm down. The brontosaurus begins to shrink. It grows smaller and smaller until it returns to cookie size.

But the pterosaur stays the same.

Uh-oh.

You don't like the way the flying dinosaur is looking at you.

You raise the spear again.

The pterosaur is too quick. It lashes out a claw, wrapping it around you.

Then it flaps its huge wings and lifts up into the air!

You back away from your cousin. “Dennis,” you say, “I don’t swim, remember? Ask a friend instead.” If you have any, you add silently.

“I’m grounded,” Dennis replies. “You’re the only one my mom will let me hang out with. Because you’re a guest.”

“Sorry,” you answer. “I have other things to do.” Like battle an ancient ghost. But you don’t tell him that either.

“I try being nice to you, and this is the thanks I get!” Dennis starts toward you, his face distorted in anger.

What a jerk! you think. But you know he can hit hard. You take off down the stairs. You hear Dennis clomping along behind you.

At the bottom of the stairs you have to make a decision. Out the front door to the park across the street? Or maybe you’ll have a better chance of losing Dennis by heading out the backdoor and into the desert.

Hide in the park on PAGE 71.

Head for the desert on PAGE 87.

You trudge up the hill. It seems much higher than it appeared. As you get closer to the top, your skin begins to prickle. Your hair stands on end. It's as if the whole mountain crackles with some kind of electricity.

What is going on?

You finally reach the top.

But you're not the first person there. Gazing down at you is a tall man dressed all in black. He wears a black suit, a black cape, and a tall black hat. He looks like a magician. His piercing green eyes gleam at you.

"What took you so long?" he demands in a booming voice. You shiver. It sounds as if several people are speaking at once.

"Wh-wh-what are you talking about?" you stammer.

He laughs. A deep, terrifying laugh. "You know very well what I mean. I've been waiting for you ever since you disturbed my cave."

Your heart begins to thud. "*Your* cave? Are you telling me —"

"That's right," he thunders. "I am the Cave Spirit. Now prepare to meet your doom!"

You slide off the end of the dinosaur's thick tongue. You hurtle toward the ground. The air whips against your face. The people down below all scream. So do you.

The green grass rushes up at you.

You try to grab scraggly tree branches. They snap off in your hands.

Can you survive the fall? Do you have anything that can save you?

Should you try the Sticky Net on PAGE 30? Do you have it?

If not, or if you don't want to use it, land on PAGE 81.

You head for the kitchen. All through lunch Dennis gives you dirty looks. You know he's still mad that you didn't give him one of your weapons. You're sure he's plotting a way to get even.

As soon as lunch is over, Dennis tugs your sleeve. "Come here," he whispers. "I want to show you something."

Maybe he'll cool off if you do what he asks. You follow him upstairs. "It's in the attic," he tells you. He opens the attic door.

Suddenly he yanks the sword from your belt. He shoves you inside the attic and slams the door.

"Ha ha! Very funny!" you shout. "Let me out!"

You hear a *CLICK* as Dennis locks the door. Then you hear his footsteps running back downstairs.

You're trapped. A sitting duck for the Cave Spirit.

Without your sword.

“How could you be waiting for me?” you ask.
“You don’t even know me.”

“I’ve been waiting for somebody to help me,” he explains. “I’m Dr. Comstock. I’m a research scientist. I’m studying desert plants and animals.” He tugs on his long gray beard.

You introduce yourself. “I’m lost,” you add. “I’m trying to get home.”

“We can help each other!” The scientist beams. “If you’ll help me with my experiment, I’ll help you get home.”

“What kind of experiment?” you ask.

“I can’t tell you unless you agree to help,” he responds. He peers at you through his thick glasses.

You think over the scientist’s request. He seems very strange. He’s probably been working alone in the desert too long, you decide.

But he’s also friendly. Maybe you should humor him and help with the experiment.

*Help Dr. Comstock with his experiment on
PAGE 94.*

*Or say good-bye and head across the desert on
PAGE 110.*

You stand facing the Cave Spirit. He glares down at you. You can practically feel the magic oozing from his fingertips.

You hold up the Wizard's Wand. "I'm ready," you declare.

"Then let the combat begin!" the Cave Spirit cries. He raises his hands. Blue sparks fly from his fingers.

You duck out of the way of the sparks. "Spark back!" you tell the wand.

Nothing happens.

The Cave Spirit sends more blue sparks showering in your direction. You feel them land on your body. Each place a spark lands sizzles. Your skin stings in pain. With each sting you feel yourself growing weaker.

"Magic sparks!" you cry, hoping the wand will respond.

The wand remains a dead stick in your hand. The Cave Spirit sends more magical sparks in your direction. You want to run. You want to hide. But you know you must stay and fight his magic with your own. If you can only figure out how.

"You are no match for me," the Cave Spirit taunts you.

He zaps you with another blue magical bolt. It knocks you to the ground. He stands over you, ready to deliver the final blow.

“Hellllp!” you yell. But the rapids are so loud they drown out your voice. Besides, there’s no one nearby to hear you.

Your mouth and ears and nose are full of water. Your legs and arms bang against hidden rocks. You can’t possibly survive much longer!

You notice a big log floating by. If you can grab on to it . . .

Paddling as hard as you can, you swim toward the log. You reach for it, but the current pulls the log away from you.

Your arms are so tired. But you try again. This time you manage to grab hold of the log’s rough bark. You grip it tightly, and pull yourself up out of the water. You straddle the top of the log.

Then you see something that makes you gasp in fear.

You decide to lure the Cave Spirit out of hiding. You want to force it to meet you on more familiar turf. With your new weapons on your belt, you hurry down the trail.

Dennis must have gone home. The whole way back to the house you keep your eyes peeled for the Cave Spirit. Ready for the attack. But nothing happens.

You find Dennis sitting on the back patio. When he sees you, his eyes go wide. "What are those?" he asks, pointing to your weapons.

"Uh, I found these in the cave," you tell him.

"Cool," he exclaims. "Give me one!"

"No way," you respond. "They're mine."

"You're going to be sorry you said that!" He takes a step toward you. He clenches a fist.

The pterosaur continues to change before your eyes. To find out what it's changing into, solve the puzzle below.

Start with the last four letters of *dinosaur*. Use the clues to change one letter at a time and make a new word. (The letter you should change is marked by a box.) The last word you make is the name of the thing the pterosaur will become.

When you think you have the correct answer, turn to the page indicated.

S	A	U	R	
—		—	—	The way a lemon tastes
—	—		—	Another word for “fly”
	—	—	—	A word for a male pig
—		—	—	The new creature

If you think the pterosaur has changed into a bear, turn to PAGE 60.

If you think it has changed into a boat, turn to PAGE 22.

You decide the Ice Rifle gives you the best chance to defeat the bear. You raise the rifle to your shoulder and aim.

“AGGROOWR!” the bear howls from the back of the cave. It starts to charge! You squeeze the trigger.

KA-CLOWIE! The rifle kicks hard against your shoulder. The force knocks you down.

Did you hit the bear?

You glance toward the back of the cave. Oh, no! The bear is still charging!

But something is wrong with it. Its fur is changing color — from dark brown to gray to icy white.

The rifle worked! The bullet hit the bear! And it’s freezing solid!

Unfortunately, that isn’t stopping it.

You watch in horror as the frozen bear skids toward you. You try to dodge it, but the huge creature topples forward. As it does, cracks appear in its body. Huge chunks of ice split off, slamming into you.

Too bad, hunter! You fought bravely. But you’re about to be stopped cold.

You crouch alone on the ledge. From inside the cave you hear a sound that makes the hair on your neck prickle.

“ARRRRROOOOOWWW! Come into my cave!”

It is the bear. Challenging you to fight.

Your mouth is dry with fear. But you stand, feeling your legs tremble. You step into the cave.

Darkness surrounds you. But soon your eyes adjust to the dim light. And your heart clutches.

The bear! It's huge! It rises onto its hind legs.

“It is time for the final test,” the bear howls. *“One — and only one — of your weapons has the power to defeat me. If you win, I will return to the Sacred Skull and you may go free. But if I win, you will become a drawing on the wall of my cave. Forever.”*

You must be braver and more clever than you have ever been before, hunter. You must choose one of the weapons in your belt. What weapon do you have left? Which weapon will defeat the bear?

If you choose the Seeker's Sword, turn to PAGE 118.

If you prefer the Sticky Net, go to PAGE 98.

If you think the Flaming Arrow will do the job, go to PAGE 88.

If you want to try the Singing Spear, try it on PAGE 68.

Or if you choose the Ice Rifle, go to PAGE 56.

You grab the Flaming Arrow from your belt. You didn't want to use such a dangerous weapon indoors — but this is an emergency! You aim it at the floor and fire.

“Whoa!” You squint in the bright golden flash. Waves of heat fill the attic. Just as you hoped, the ice begins to melt. It worked!

Only it worked too well! Water spreads through the attic. Faster than you thought possible.

You had no idea there was so much ice! The next thing you know — you're in freezing water up to your eyebrows.

The lion howls in panic. It paddles furiously, trying to stay afloat.

The water continues to rise. And rise! The force of it pushes open the attic door. You, the mountain lion, and all the junk in the attic pour down the stairs. The front door is torn off its hinges as the water rushes into the street.

Desperately, you struggle to keep your head above water. The torrent pours into a nearby creek. You tumble head over heels as the floodwaters sweep you along.

You come up for air, gasping. Oh, no! You can see the foaming waves on a huge, rushing river. The creek heads straight for it.

You're about to be dumped into the rapids!

“Stop time!” you shout desperately. “Small, small! Open sesame! Wet all over!”

The Cave Spirit gazes at you as if you’ve lost your mind. “Nice spells,” he remarks. “But they don’t work with the wand. I’d say it’s time for you to become part of my art collection.”

“No!” you cry. “No! Please give me —”

“SHALAKAZAAAM!” the Cave Spirit bellows. Blue energy flies from his fingertips and surrounds you. You go numb all over. You feel strange . . . lightweight. So light that you begin to float.

The next thing you know you’re staring down at the Cave Spirit from a position high on the wall of his cave.

You can’t believe it. You’ve lost. You’ve become a picture on the wall of the Cave Spirit’s cave.

THE END

The pterosaur is changing into a bear!

You watch, fascinated, as its legs become straighter and thicker. Its face becomes shorter. Fur sprouts from its body.

The bear opens its mouth and roars. It's deafening!

The sound of the roar fills the canyon. But you can hear words in the roar too.

"I am the Cave Spirit," the bear's roar says. "This is my true form. You have been a worthy foe. You have nearly beaten me several times. But now it is time for the hunt to really begin. It is time for us to match wits in my sacred cave. May the best hunter win."

You open your mouth to reply. But before you can think of anything to say, the bear vanishes.

You reach for your weapon. But before your fingers can grip it, the pterosaur scoops you up in its long, strong beak. It flies to the top of the tallest tree in the park.

The next thing you know, you're looking down at the park — from *inside* the pterosaur's mouth!

Phew! You gag from the stench. The inside of the creature's mouth smells worse than a thousand garbage cans. Its tongue is rough and leathery underneath you. You peer out through jagged teeth.

You tremble with fear when you see how far away the ground is. You watch people running toward you. They look as tiny as ants.

"Help!" you yell. But you're up too high for anyone to hear you. And even if they could, who would rescue you from inside a pterosaur's mouth?

Still, things could be worse. You could be in the pterosaur's *stomach*.

You don't know what to do. You can't use a weapon. You're afraid if you hurt the pterosaur you'll fall to your death.

A crowd begins to gather. You hear sirens approaching. Help is on the way!

The pterosaur leans down for a better look. It opens its mouth.

Whoops! You slip and start to fall.

“Quick! Give me the knife!” you order.

The woman hands you the knife. And just in time — the mastodon is charging toward you. The ground shakes with every step it takes.

The knife is a joke. You can’t believe you’re supposed to scare such a huge beast with it. But you have no choice. This is your only way back to the outside world.

You step out from behind the rocks and wave the puny knife. “Go away!” you shout at the mastodon. “I am a mighty hunter!”

The mastodon trumpets loudly. Then its eyes focus on the knife. Suddenly, the creature begins to shake. It turns around and starts running.

You can’t believe it! You stare at the little knife. Then you chase after the mastodon. “Go on!” you shout, waving the knife. “Beat it! Scat! Shoo!”

The mastodon glances back. Its huge face seems filled with terror. It’s so scared it doesn’t look where it is going. A moment later —

KABOOOOOOOM! The mastodon slams right into the canyon wall. The ground trembles and rocks begin falling from above.

Within minutes, huge boulders bury the ugly beast.

“Oh, no!” Professor Greenwell cries in dismay.

You reach into your pocket and grab the tiny skull talisman. "Small, small!" you shout.

The chittering sound of the insects grows louder.

Terrified, you glance down at your feet.

The tarantulas and scorpions are growing *bigger*, not smaller!

Quickly, you say the spell again. Louder.

But the tarantula on your leg grows even bigger. It grows to the size of a basketball, then becomes as big as a Great Dane. Its weight knocks you over.

As you fall into the sand, a scorpion the size of a mountain lion approaches. It waves its huge pincers at you. Its hooked tail drips green poison.

In terror, you peer up at Dr. Comstock. But the top of the pit is so far away you can hardly see him.

And then you realize what has happened. The insects haven't grown bigger — *you've* grown smaller! Mini-spell backfired on you!

Alas, spellcaster, you have big ideas. But you're just too small to make them work.

THE END

You realize with horror that Dr. Comstock is completely crazy. “Let me out!” you shriek.

“That would ruin the experiment,” Dr. Comstock replies.

You glance down. The sand swarms with hairy black tarantulas. They range in size from a quarter to a dinner plate.

The scorpions are even worse. They’re not as big as the tarantulas. But their long, curved stingers drip poison.

Your limbs tremble with fright. You edge over to one side of the pit. You try to climb up its steep sides. But there’s nothing to hold on to. All that happens is your shoes fill with sand.

The tarantulas and scorpions seem to sense you. They begin moving in your direction.

You stand very, very still.

Your only hope is to use magic. But what spells do you have? Which one should you use?

Did you bring the watch talisman? To use it, turn to PAGE 19.

Do you still have your wand? Maybe you should use it on PAGE 97.

If you want to try Rain, turn to PAGE 102.

To try to save yourself with Mini-spell, turn to PAGE 63.

You only have a moment to think. You have to get the wand to work! Your life depends on it!

Maybe if you say the magic words to all of the spells, it will jump-start the wand.

Or — maybe you should forget about the wand's magic and use it as a weapon.

Decide quickly.

To use all the magic words, turn to PAGE 59.

Or to use the wand as a weapon, turn to PAGE 69.

“I will be a spellcaster and fight using magic,” you tell the shaman.

Whoa! You can’t believe *those* words came out of *your* mouth!

“You have no time to lose,” the shaman replies. “The Cave Spirit is already preparing his powers against you.” The shaman waves his hands in the air. The cave fills with purple fog. A bright light flashes. You feel a current shoot through your body.

“You are now a spellcaster,” the shaman announces. He hands you a gold-colored stick the size of a baton. “Here is your main magical tool, the Wizard’s Wand.”

The wand feels warm and tingly in your hand. “Will this kill the Cave Spirit?” you ask.

“The wand cannot kill or disable,” the shaman replies. “But it will do what you ask it — if you use the correct words.”

“But how will I know the words?” you persist.

“The words are different depending on the circumstances. Always think before you speak.”

That’s a big help, you think. How will you ever defeat the Cave Spirit? Is it too late to change your mind?

“You may also take three other spells,” the shaman continues. “Each of them has important strengths. But each must be used correctly or they could backfire. Choose very carefully.”

“Each spell has a talisman to go with it,” the shaman explains. “A talisman is a magical object that causes the spell to work. Listen to the descriptions of the spells, and choose.”

The shaman snaps his fingers. A tiny sponge appears in his hand. “The first spell is Rain,” he says. “This spell will unleash a torrent on your enemy. But if misused it can cause a flood. To use this spell, squeeze the sponge and say: ‘Wet all over!’” He places the sponge on the stone altar in front of him.

“The next spell is Mini-spell,” the shaman continues. He now holds a miniature skull. “This spell will make your opponent shrink. But it can backfire and shrink *you*. To use this spell, hold the skull and say: ‘Small, small!’” He lays the skull beside the sponge.

“The third spell is Stop-time,” the shaman goes on. He shows you a tiny watch. “This spell freezes time. But the amount of time it stops cannot be predicted. Press the watch stem and say: ‘Stop time!’ to use this spell.”

The shaman holds up a tiny key. “The Magic Key spell can open any lock. To use this spell, hold the key and say, ‘Open sesame!’”

The shaman glares at you. “Are you ready?” he demands.

Well, are you? If the answer is yes, go to PAGE 124.

You're sure the Singing Spear will stop the bear. You hold your weapon ready. Your heart is pounding so loud you wonder if the bear can hear it.

The bear growls at you from the back of the cave. You take aim and throw the spear.

ZINNNNGGGGGGGGG! The eerie song of the Singing Spear fills the cave. The spear heads straight for the bear. The bear growls and swats at the spear in the air. It twists and spins, then floats above the bear. The spear emits its strange and powerful shriek.

“ARRRRRROOOWWWW!” The bear can't stand the sound. It howls and foams at the mouth. Then it glares at you. As if it blamed you for torturing it with the spear.

The bear lunges for you, crazed. The Singing Spear turns and follows it. It hovers over the bear. Tormenting it.

But it's only spurring the bear on! You need to do something. It's about to attack!

You grip the wand tightly. Then you swing it at the Cave Spirit as hard as you can. You hit him in the shins.

“OW!” he yells, jumping back. He raises his arms to zap you.

But the wand begins to glow warm in your hand. Then a yellow bolt of energy flies out of its tip. It meets the blue sparks from the Cave Spirit’s fingers.

It worked! Somehow, hitting the Cave Spirit with the wand made the wand kick into gear.

The magical energies meet — and explode! Blue and yellow sparks fly in all directions. The air fills with the smell of burning wood.

You and the Cave Spirit aim your magical energies at each other. The swirling sparks meet and sizzle together in midair.

POP! CRACK! SZZZZZZZZ!

You hear desert creatures scurrying for shelter. Birds flap away in panic.

The magical duel continues. Will you be able to overcome the powerful Cave Spirit?

Staring out at you from inside the closet is a human skeleton.

Obviously, Dennis is playing a joke on you.

“Very funny!” you mutter when your heart stops thundering.

But it starts pounding again when the skeleton steps toward you! It reaches out with its long, bony hands. “I’ve been waiting for you,” it declares. “I’ve been so lonely. I want you to join me.”

“Yeah, right.” You’re impressed by the prank. How is Dennis making the skeleton move?

“Be my pal,” the skeleton begs. It reaches out and touches your left hand. You jump at the icy touch. You glance down.

Your skin and muscles have disappeared. Your hand is only bones!

“Give up,” the skeleton goes on. “Everywhere I touch, you will become like me.”

“No!” you screech. With horror, you realize the skeleton is no joke. It’s real. It’s been sent by your enemy, the Cave Spirit.

And then you remember your magical tools. Quick! Choose one!

Maybe you could shrink the skeleton so it can’t touch you. If you brought Mini-spell, turn to PAGE 11.

Or can and will you try to stop time with the talisman watch on PAGE 107?

Or will you use the Wizard’s Wand on PAGE 84?

You dash out the front door and head for the park. I can't believe it, you think. It's not bad enough I have an evil spirit after me, now my cousin's mad at me too. I wish I never went into that cave!

You duck behind some bushes, your heart pounding. Soon your stomach starts to growl. You peer out through the thick shrubs. No sign of Dennis. You grin when you spot an ice cream cart nearby.

You creep out of your hiding place. You dart through the crowds to the ice cream cart. Your eyes widen as you step up to the vendor.

The woman selling the ice cream is incredibly weird-looking. She's dressed all in black. Her skin is greenish. Her eyes are squinty and red. Her face is covered with bumpy warts.

Yuck! But you're too hot and hungry to care what she looks like. "One ice cream, please," you tell her.

She opens the lid of the cart. "Look inside and choose what you want," she invites.

You lean over and glance in. Cold steam rises up from the ice inside. You can't see anything.

You bend over farther. The next thing you know, you feel bony hands pushing you into the cart!

“You’re holding the wand by the wrong end,” the skeleton points out.

Duh! Now you realize what’s wrong. You’re holding the end that was supposed to zap the skeleton. Instead, you zapped yourself.

You told the wand to stop the skeleton. And under your skin and muscles, you are also a skeleton. So it stopped *you*.

“Now you’ll be my pal,” the skeleton declares.

It reaches out and touches you. You watch yourself turn into a pile of bones. And there’s nothing you can do about it.

Too bad, spellcaster. You tried your best . . . but this time the magic just wasn’t there.

THE END

You stare at the Cave Spirit. Your legs shake in fear. But you try to appear brave and confident. “I’m not afraid of you,” you declare. “My magic spells are ready.”

“You will need more than those puny spells,” the Cave Spirit informs you. “You will need courage and brains — and luck. And even those may not be enough!” He points at you. Green sparks fly out of his fingertips.

The sparks shoot toward you in a solid line. They wrap around your throat like a rope. They begin to squeeze.

You try to scream, but nothing comes out.

You can’t breathe!

The snake is so afraid of your sword, it drops into the toilet!

This is your chance! You grab the handle and flush. You alternate stunning the snake with the sword and flushing it down the toilet.

Inch by inch, the snake disappears down the drain. You keep flushing. Until it's gone.

You sigh in relief. You're safe — for now. You won the first round with the Cave Spirit.

You feel powerful. You brought down your enemy. But you're also scared. Now you know the Cave Spirit can take any form. He will be impossible to track. All you can do is stay alert. Let him show itself. The Cave Spirit will have the element of surprise on his side. But you'll be ready.

You hope.

You let out a sigh of relief. It's just your little cousin Nancy. She grins up at you.

"I saw you from the playground," she declares. "I wanted to share my cookies with you."

She really is a cute kid, you think. "Thanks. I could definitely go for a snack." Fighting the Cave Spirit is hard work!

She holds up a box of cookies.

You glance down and freeze. Your heart drops to your toes.

"Wh-what are those?" you stammer.

“Help!” you scream. “Let me out!”

The lid slams down in your face. You feel the cart lurch and roll. You’ve never been so cold in your life.

What’s going on? you wonder. Where is she taking me? And why?

Your teeth start to chatter. You are shivering all over by the time the cart stops moving. The lid pops open.

You poke your head out of the cart. Your eyes widen as you glance around. All around you are thick, dark woods. There’s no sign of the ice cream lady. But you see the ashes of a campfire.

You’re freezing! You climb out of the ice cream cart and head for the fire pit. You notice a white circle drawn on the ground. You step inside it and use your scout training to restart the fire. You’ve got to warm up.

You hold your hands out over the flames, trying to figure out what is going on. Where am I? you wonder. How will I ever get back? And where is the ice cream vendor?

You hear a cackling laugh behind you. You whirl around.

The ice cream lady stands at the edge of the clearing. “Figured it out yet, kid?” she snarls. “I’m a sorceress. And you’re my prisoner.”

BONK!

The axe hits the mastodon between the eyes.

The mastodon stiffens, and then begins to topple over.

Its trunk relaxes and drops you to the ground.

“You did it!” the scientists shout from behind the rocks. “Congratulations, mighty hunter!”

You’d like to accept the scientists’ thanks, but there’s just one problem.

You landed right where the mastodon is about to fall.

There’s no time to do anything — except shut your eyes while three tons of ancient elephant collapse on top of you.

THE END

“Oooma gooma toomey,” the sorceress intones.
“Oooma toada boada!”

You wave the Wizard’s Wand. “Let me out of here!” you cry.

You take a step. *BAM*. You bang into the barrier. “Break circle!” you instruct the wand.

You take another step. *WHAM*. No luck. The wand isn’t working.

“Oooma . . . gooma . . . Froggy!” the sorceress declares.

Your skin feels tighter. You glance down at your hands. Oh, no! Green and black spots cover them! You’re transforming!

In desperation, you hurl the wand at the sorceress. She opens her eyes in surprise. Then she grins. An ugly, evil grin.

“Perfect,” she declares. “I couldn’t complete the spell until you dropped the wand. Now I can finish. Gooma fly!”

POP! The air around you seems to explode. You’re falling! When you land, you gaze up. The sorceress towers above you. You open your mouth to scream, but all that comes out is . . .

“RIBIT! RIBIT!”

THE END

You pull the Singing Spear out of your belt. You take aim.

The dog races toward you. You can see a ferocious glint in its eyes. The glint of the Cave Spirit.

You throw as hard as you can.

ZIIIIINN>NNNNNNNNNGGGGGGGGGGGG!

Your ears ring as the spear heads straight toward the Doberman.

The Doberman falls to the ground and paws at its ears. It whines as the spear hovers over it. Then the dog scrambles to its feet and takes off in the other direction.

The spear spins in midair and returns to your hand. Cool!

“Wow!” Dennis approaches you. “Can I check out your spear?”

“Forget it,” you reply. “And give me back my sword!” You don’t wait for Dennis to answer. You grab the sword.

“Watch it!” Dennis yells. “Who do you think —”

“Back off!” you snap. You thrust the sword at Dennis.

His face goes pale. He turns and runs away.

With a smile, you start back across the street. Finally you put Dennis in his place. Now to find the Cave Spirit.

You’re stopped by a cold, angry voice.

“Not so fast!”

“All right,” you tell the terrified sorceress. “I’ll put out the fire.”

You jab the burning end of the wand into the dirt. With a hiss, the flames die away.

“Thank you.” The sorceress shudders. “That fire gave me the creeps.”

“Now let me go,” you demand.

“No way,” she replies.

Your mouth drops open. “But you promised you’d let me go!” you protest. “And sorceresses can’t break promises.”

“No,” she answers. “I promised I wouldn’t turn you into a frog. But I didn’t say anything about not turning you into a snake.”

“Wait!” you cry. “You can’t!”

But it’s too late. She’s already waving her arms and saying magical words. You feel your skin become smooth and scaly. You try to grab for the wand to set it on fire again. But your arms have disappeared.

“It’s not fair!” you try to shout. But all that comes out is “HISSSS HSSSSSS HISSSSS!”

Sorry, spellcaster. Thissssss issssss the

END.

The ground zooms up at you.

You feel the wind rush by.

You know you'll be flattened like a pancake.

You hold your breath and brace for the crash.

But instead of smashing into the earth, you feel something grab you. You open your eyes.

You're in the pterosaur's clawed hand.

It gazes down at you with its evil red eyes. For a moment, it looks as if it's smiling.

Then it takes off. Its thick, leathery wings flap with a loud *WHAPPING* sound.

The next thing you know, you're sailing over the desert.

“I am the Fire Spirit!” the whirlwind roars.
“Prepare to burn!”

You watch in horror as the whirlwind grows arms of fire. It scoops up a huge ball of dead leaves. The leaves burst into flame. The Fire Spirit throws the fiery ball into the air. When it lands, it ignites the trees behind you.

You are too terrified to move. All you can do is stare as the Fire Spirit blows long flames out of its mouth. The trees to your right catch fire. It blows more flames in the other direction. Birds and animals scatter in panic. The sound is deafening.

“You cannot escape!” the Fire Spirit roars.

“No!” you scream. You turn to run. But where can you go? The entire forest is in flames.

The heat is so intense you feel as if you could melt. Calm down! you order yourself. Think!

You raise your wand. “Stop the fire!” you command.

The Fire Spirit laughs. “Your pathetic little wand can’t defeat me! Besides, you burned the magic out of it.”

You stare at the Fire Spirit, your heart sinking. The Wizard’s Wand is useless! Your other spells are useless too — unless . . .

Did you bring Rain? If so, you may be able to defeat the Fire Spirit. If not, your only hope is to run away from it.

Use Rain on PAGE 28.

Or try to run away on PAGE 103.

You're going to take the Cave Spirit by surprise. Shove him off the hill.

"I will explain my two challenges," the Cave Spirit tells you. "The first one is a test of —"

But you aren't listening. With a shriek, you lunge at him.

Oops! Before you reach the Cave Spirit, you trip on a rock. You hit the ground hard. Your talismans fall out of your pocket — and roll down the hill.

You try to catch your breath. The wind was knocked out of you. And you are filled with terror, knowing that without the talismans you are completely powerless.

The Cave Spirit gazes down at you. "Fool! Did you really think you could defeat me that way?" he demands.

"My magic talismans!" you cry. "Let me get them —"

"Too late!" the Cave Spirit thunders.

You pull the Wizard's Wand from your belt. You wave it at the skeleton. Nothing happens.

The skeleton takes a step closer. It raises its long, skinny hands. You can hear its bones clanking. "Be my pal," it moans.

"Never!" you cry. Why didn't the wand stop the skeleton? you wonder. Then you remember — you have to use the right words for the wand to work. "Make the skeleton stop moving!" you tell the wand.

The skeleton steps closer. Its bony fingers reach for you.

You jump back. What are you doing wrong? Maybe the words are supposed to sound like magic words, you think.

"Alakazam!" you shout.

"Give up!" the skeleton urges. "Give up and be my pal."

"Stop! Don't move! Go away!" you cry desperately. No luck. "Stop, skeleton!" you call.

As soon as the words are out of your mouth, the wand becomes warm. The end you are holding starts to glow. It's working!

The skeleton reaches for you. You try to dodge its bony hands. But something is wrong. Your movements are s . . . l . . . o . . . w . . . S . . . o . . . slowww . . .

"Wrong end," the skeleton comments.

What does the skeleton mean?

You snatch up the Ice Rifle and aim it at the pterosaur. The beast glares at you with its glittering red eyes.

You try not to let it see how frightened you are. Carefully, slowly, you aim at the deadly winged creature. Then fire!

“CAWWWWK! CAWWWWK! CAWWWWK!” The pterosaur seems to laugh as the bullets bounce harmlessly off its thick hide. The grass freezes where they land.

Your weapons are useless, hunter! It’s time to get out of here!

You turn and start to run.

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP!

You hear the pterosaur’s thick, leathery wings beating above you. You glance up in terror.

“Aaggghhh!” you shriek as the dinosaur’s claws wrap around you.

The next thing you know, you’re soaring up, up, and out over the desert.

You follow the trail to the desert. At least the hot sun dries you off. That spell created some downpour! You squint as you peer across the bright sand.

In the distance, you notice something that looks like a small town. But there are no towns out here in the middle of the desert. Very strange, you think. What could it be?

You decide to head toward the buildings. Maybe somebody lives there. Maybe they can take you back to your cousin's house.

You trudge across the desert toward the town. You let the Wizard's Wand drop to the ground. It's useless. Burned down to a stump. Cross it off your list.

The sand is so hot you can feel it through your shoes. The only shade is from tall, skinny cactuses. And you can't help wondering what the Cave Spirit will send your way next.

You glance up. The town is much closer now.

You're so thirsty you could spit sand. At last you reach the edge of the settlement. A sign announces: ENTERING DRY GULCH. GHOST TOWN.

You know that a ghost town is just a town that no one lives in. There's nothing to be afraid of here — or is there?

Enter Dry Gulch on PAGE 41.

Or pass it by and go to PAGE 116.

You slip out the back gate and take off across the desert. Your cousin's house is soon out of sight.

You collapse under a towering cactus. Now what? you wonder. You know that the Cave Spirit will be searching for you. You also know that Dennis is after you.

You grasp the Wizard's Wand. You like how it feels. Tingly and warm. Maybe you should try to get the Cave Spirit to appear. That way you can get this battle over with. Once and for all.

"Cave Spirit!" you call. But your voice cracks. Your throat is parched. Sweat trickles down the back of your neck.

"Well, I'm not doing anything until I get a soda," you declare. Only one problem. There are no convenience stores in the desert. And you're not sure which way to go to get back to your cousin's house.

You climb onto a rock and glance around. As far as you can see, nothing but sand!

Then you spot a sign: GHOST TOWN AHEAD.

You know a ghost town is just an empty town. But maybe you can find a phone there to get your aunt to come pick you up.

Or maybe you should avoid the town and keep searching for the Cave Spirit.

Head for the ghost town on PAGE 41.

Keep going on PAGE 116.

“You’re no match for my Flaming Arrow!” you shout at the bear.

The bear glares at you, then opens its mouth and howls. With a sudden movement, it bounds across the cave directly toward you.

You jump aside, then dart toward the back of the cave. Then you turn, aim the arrow, and fire.

The Flaming Arrow glows red. It lights up the dark cave. The bear howls in fear and dashes out of the cave. The arrow pierces the dirt at the entrance. It juts out of the wall.

WHOOSH! The front cave wall goes up in flames.

Your mouth drops open as you watch the floor, sides, and top of the cave burn with the magical fire. The flames quickly spread — toward you!

You feel the heat from the fire on your skin. The air is so hot you can hardly breathe. You back farther into the cave.

But there’s nowhere to go.

Face it. It was a bad idea, hunter. You should know better than to play with fire in such a small place.

Shut your eyes against the fiery blaze.

You feel your hunter's blood surge through you. You are going to go after that flying beast. You're sick of the Cave Spirit's ambushes and surprise attacks.

You scan the group of dinosaurs. They are transforming much more slowly than the pterosaur. You figure it's because they were transformed by accident. They are still the size of large dogs. But you know they'll reach full size soon.

You spot a brontosaurus. Perfect. It's about the size of a horse. You'll be able to climb on to it. And by the time you catch up to the pterosaur, it should be as big as a building.

You also know the brontosaurus is a vegetarian. Which means it eats plants — and not you!

The brontosaurus reaches its long neck up into the trees. It chomps some leaves. Good. You'll climb aboard while it's distracted.

You dart around a small stegosaurus, taking care to avoid its spiky tail. You sneak up to the brontosaurus.

You reach out and touch its leathery hide. It pays no attention. You bend your knees, then spring up. You scramble up onto its back, just below its neck.

You can't believe it. You're sitting on a dinosaur!

Uh-oh. The brontosaurus has noticed you now!

“SNOOORRRKKK! SNOOCCCKKK!” You watch the sheriff snore. For a dead guy, he makes some racket. Slowly, you form a plan.

“Hey, sheriff, wake up!” you shout.

The sheriff opens his eyes and frowns. “What?” he mumbles.

“I have a riddle for you,” you announce. “If you can’t guess it, I win and you have to let me out. If you guess it, I’ll stay here without complaining.”

“All right,” the sheriff agrees. “It will make the time pass. What’s the riddle?”

“What’s black and white and red all over but isn’t a newspaper?” you ask. You really hope he hasn’t heard this one. But you figure as a ghost sheriff in the desert, he can’t get around much.

The sheriff frowns. “I don’t know,” he admits. “Let me think.”

You smile to yourself. This was an excellent plan.

“I give up,” the sheriff says at last. “What’s the answer?”

“An embarrassed zebra,” you declare.

The sheriff stares at you, then laughs. “That’s a good one,” he hoots. “You win. A deal’s a deal. I’ll set you free.” He approaches your jail cell. He inserts the key in the lock —

CRACK!

“Uh-oh,” the sheriff mutters.

You try to climb out of the pit again. But for every step up, you slide down two.

You can't get out. And the more you try, the hotter, hungrier, and thirstier you get.

There's no way anyone can rescue you while time is stopped. And there's no way you can get out of the pit on your own. Even if you had a thousand years.

Which you don't.

The sun seems to grow hotter.

You have no water and no food. No way to find shade.

You glance at your watch. It's stuck — at high noon.

You feel hot and dizzy. Your skin begins to blister from the heat. Spots appear before your eyes.

Too bad, spellcaster. Your magic worked . . . but it appears that now time has run out for you. And this sizzling adventure is about to come to an

END.

You're not sticking around for this Jurassic nightmare!

You spin around and run.

Right into a triceratops.

You're familiar with the triceratops, right? Armorlike ruff around its neck. Nasty-looking horn in the center of its face.

Yeah, that one.

And that horn? It comes in very handy when a triceratops wants to spear its prey. Really shred it. Yank its insides out.

Like now.

Which is why, hunter, this is a really gory

END.

You open your eyes in confusion. At first you can't figure out where you are. Everything seems far away. And dark.

As your eyes adjust, you realize you're in the bear's cave. But the ground is far below you. You seem to be up high. As if you were perched on the wall.

The wall. Oh, no!

You try to move. But you can't. You can't even wiggle your fingers.

With horror, you realize that you've become a picture on the wall of the bear's cave. You've been added to the Cave Spirit's collection.

You fought bravely, hunter. But the bear won, and for you this adventure has reached an un-BEAR-able

END.

"I'll help with your experiment," you tell the scientist.

"Splendid!" he exclaims. "Come this way."

You follow Dr. Comstock to a large, deep sand-pit.

"I'm researching desert life," Dr. Comstock explains. "I'm trying to find out how plants and animals live in hot, dry places."

"That's interesting," you reply. "But I don't see any living things down there."

"That's what I need *you* for." Dr. Comstock gives you a crazy-looking grin. Then he shoves you straight into the pit.

You spread out your arms and legs to try to stop yourself. But you zip straight to the bottom.

You glare up at Dr. Comstock. "Let me out of here!" you yell.

"When the experiment is over," Dr. Comstock replies. He lifts a big canvas bag. He shakes its contents into the pit.

You gasp. Your stomach squeezes and your chest tightens.

Tarantulas and scorpions!

The head opens its mouth. A long pink tongue licks the sharp yellow teeth.

Your heart races as you watch the head grow a body!

First a neck appears, then the rest of the long tawny trunk. It sprouts four muscular legs. Paws appear at the end of each leg, tipped with razor-sharp claws. You can't believe how quickly it transforms.

The lion stretches and yawns. Then it crouches. Its tail twitches. It looks exactly like a cat getting ready to pounce.

Quick! Grab a weapon!

Why did Dennis have to take your sword?

Even if you have the Flaming Arrow, it won't do you any good. You wouldn't dare use it indoors!

So what will you use to fight the mountain lion?

If you brought the Ice Rifle and choose to use it, turn to PAGE 114.

If you have the Sticky Net and want to try it, go to PAGE 33.

If you're holding and want to throw the Singing Spear, go to PAGE 126.

Luckily, before he can pound you, Aunt Lucy comes out on the patio. “You’re just in time for lunch,” she announces.

“I’ll get even with you later,” Dennis mutters.

Great. Not only is the Cave Spirit after you — so is your cousin. Can this day get any worse?

You head for the bathroom to wash up. One of your cousin Nancy’s stuffed animals sits on the edge of the bathtub. A fuzzy green snake.

You’re soaping your hands when you hear a hissing noise. You glance toward the bathtub.

Terror rushes through you.

You decide to try the Wizard's Wand. But you are so frightened your hands tremble. You have trouble getting the wand out of your belt.

The scorpions and tarantulas gather around your feet. There are dozens of them. The tarantulas' long, hairy legs quiver as they step forward. The scorpions click as they shake their poison stingers. You feel nauseous just looking at them. Knowing they are deadly creatures makes you shiver, even in the intense heat.

You fumble with the wand as you back up. You press yourself into the sandy side of the pit. But the hideous insects move closer. You are completely surrounded.

You finally wrestle the wand from your belt. You wave it over the insects. "Leave me alone!" you cry.

The wand glows. The insects all turn around at once and scurry to the opposite side of the pit. It's working!

"No!" Dr. Comstock shouts from above. He waves his hands. The insects all head back toward you.

You glance at the scientist in terror. What is going on?

You have great confidence in the Sticky Net. It has saved you several times. You remove it from your belt and face the bear.

The bear howls. Its sharp yellow teeth glint in the dim light.

“Come on, bear!” you taunt. “Come closer!” You’re going to win this battle, once and for all!

The bear glares at you. Then it bounds forward.

At the same moment, you throw the Sticky Net.

The net seems to float in the air, and then it descends.

As you had hoped, it settles on the bear.

Ooops! It also settles on you. That wasn’t part of the plan!

You roll to one side, trying to get out from under the net. But its strands stick tightly to your skin.

The bear thrashes and growls as it tries to get loose. Every movement it makes wraps you both up tighter.

You tremble as you realize the horror of your situation. You’re trapped inside the Sticky Net. *With* the bear!

The bear realizes it too. It fixes its glinting, evil eyes on you. Then it opens its mouth wide. Its sharp teeth are only inches from your head.

Close your eyes so you don’t have to see them, hunter.

"The creatures on the wall were bees and wasps!" you cry. "Bees! Wasps! Come help me!"

"That's pathetic," Dr. Comstock comments. "Bees and wasps are no match for tarantulas and scorpions."

"Please!" you beg. "Call off your insects!"

"Sorry," the scientist replies. "This experiment has worked out very nicely. And now it's time for my little pets to finish their job."

He waves his hands in the air. "Attack!" he shouts.

You wave your wand, but you shake so hard with fear that it slips out of your hands.

The tarantulas and scorpions surround you. They crawl onto your feet, then up your legs. You feel the tiny pricks of a thousand tiny legs. In a moment you'll feel the pricks of a hundred tiny stingers.

There's no more magic, spellcaster. And no more hope. For now, your adventure has come to a creepy, crawly

END.

The lion shoves you to the back of the cave. It drags you onto its nest of animal skins.

It's going to eat me now! you think. You shut your eyes, expecting to be torn to pieces.

Instead you feel something rough, like sandpaper, on your face. You open your eyes and discover the lion is licking you.

A strange rumbling fills the air.

The mountain lion is purring!

The big cat seems to have adopted you! It thinks that you're its kitten. It's bathing you now. Maybe soon it will feed you. You hope that someday you'll be able to get away.

But for now, you just feel like li-on around.

THE END

The current brings the struggling animal closer. The mountain lion seems too weak to hurt you. You hesitate a moment, then reach out and grab its tail. You pull the lion toward the log. You grip its tail while it scrambles onto the log beside you.

The mountain lion stretches out on its stomach. While you watch warily, it relaxes. It opens its eyes and blinks at you. It seems friendly now.

Could your kindness to the animal have pleased the Cave Spirit? you wonder. Is he going to lay off now?

But you have no chance to enjoy this moment of peace. A deafening roar fills the air. You notice the river is growing narrower. Up ahead you see a wall of white foam.

With horror, you realize that you and the lion are headed for a waterfall!

You grab the tiny sponge talisman and squeeze it. "Wet all over!" you shout.

A distant rumbling rolls through the desert. The sky grows dark.

The tarantulas and scorpions are starting up your leg. You scream and kick them away. They crawl toward you again. Please let this spell work, you think desperately.

A thick black cloud blots out the sun.

CRACK!

A huge lightning bolt splits the sky. Rain pours down. It washes the insects off you. Water begins to fill the sandpit.

You rush to the edge of the pit. Maybe you can climb the sides, now that they're wet. But it's too steep.

Water continues to pour in. Gross! Bodies of drowned insects float around you.

The water rises to your knees. Up to your waist.

Rain saved you from the tarantulas and scorpions. But now it looks as if you're sunk!

You drop the burned wand and run. You know your chances aren't good, but you have no choice. Maybe, you think, you'll find a stream to jump into.

You head for some bushes that aren't on fire. Just as you reach them, the Fire Spirit laughs and hurls flames at you. The bushes blaze up.

You duck around a big pine tree.

And then you see it! Up ahead — a pond! Safety! You dash toward the pond as fast as you can. You can hear the crackling and spitting of the flames racing after you.

Your lungs are bursting but you reach the pond before the Fire Spirit.

You jump in.

You sink straight to the bottom.

Your plan was excellent, except for the fact that you can't swim. Remember? Sorry, spellcaster. This time your plans have all gone up in smoke — and you're sunk!

THE END

You are stunned to see the insects obey Dr. Comstock. Your heart sinks when you hear Dr. Comstock's explanation.

"My insects have been specially bred and trained by the Cave Spirit," the scientist informs you. "Your magic will only work temporarily. These creatures can only be defeated by other insects. But that would require a knowledge you don't have."

Your hands shake so hard you can scarcely hold the wand. "What do you mean?" you demand.

"On a cave wall far from here there are drawings of insects that are deadly foes of these," Dr. Comstock explains. "Only someone who knows what those insects are can call on them for help."

Maybe it's not as hopeless as you think, spell-caster. There were drawings of insects on the walls of the cave where you set the Cave Spirit free. Do you remember what they were?

*Were they bees and wasps? Turn to PAGE 99.
Or were they caterpillars and butterflies? Go to
PAGE 134.*

The lion heads into the desert. You have no choice but to go with it. Not if you still want to stay attached to your arm.

Where is it taking me? you wonder.

You stumble alongside the lion for miles. Your arm hurts and you're exhausted. But if you don't keep up, you're afraid the lion will tear your arm out of the socket.

Finally you reach some sandy foothills. The lion stops in front of a small, dark cave. It grabs your shirt and tugs you inside.

You shudder when you see the animal bones scattered on the ground. You have a horrible feeling that your bones will join them soon.

You hurl the Singing Spear at the pterosaur. It soars above the dinosaur, making a high-pitched whine.

“CAAAWW!” the pterosaur squawks. It flaps its wings and backs up. It kicks over the cookie box. The cookies tumble out onto the grass.

Oh, no! The cookies! They’re all turning into living, breathing dinosaurs! Stegosaurus! T. rex! Brontosaur!

Yikes!

The spear still hovers above the pterosaur. The flying dinosaur must hate the sound — it shrieks and flies away. The spear follows it, emitting its eerie sound.

Leaving you surrounded by prehistoric monsters.

You gaze around at the growing cookie-beasts. They give you an idea. Maybe you could ride one — and go after the pterosaur. Hunt down and defeat the Cave Spirit.

But that could be really dangerous. These new dinosaurs might also be filled with the Cave Spirit’s evil power.

And their mouths are definitely full of sharp, deadly teeth!

To use one of the dinosaurs to chase the pterosaur, turn to PAGE 89.

To get out of there fast, turn to PAGE 92.

You press the knob at the end of the tiny watch. "Stop time!" you shout. You press it again — harder.

You hear a tiny little clattering sound. You glance down. The watch stem has broken off. It lands on the floor. It begins to roll away, then stops.

The skeleton freezes. It stares at you.

You stare back. Unblinking. Unmoving.

Uh-oh.

That's right, spellcaster. You broke the talisman. Which means time has stopped — permanently. For you and everyone else.

So the skeleton wins after all. You will keep it company . . . for all time!

THE END

You're pleased. You have defeated the Cave Spirit — again. You're a hunter after all.

So tracking down your cousin shouldn't be too hard.

You creep through the house. You want to sneak up on him. Give him a shock. He still thinks you're trapped in the attic!

"Are you looking for Dennis, dear?" your aunt calls from the kitchen. "I think he went to the park across the street."

Okay. So sometimes even a great hunter needs a little help.

You dash out the door.

And hear a nasty growl behind you.

The water is up to your neck! You're sure you're going to drown. This stinks! you think. I'm the only person in history to drown in the desert.

You tread water, but your muscles ache with exhaustion. And the floating bug bodies gross you out!

The rain beats down on you. The water grows deeper. You manage to keep your head above water. You reach the top of the sandpit. You kick over to the side and climb out.

Dr. Comstock stands in a puddle of mud. Water streams from his clothes, down his mustache. "You ruined my experiment!" he cries.

"Too bad," you snap.

"I have another experiment in mind," Dr. Comstock wheedles.

"Forget it!" You shove Dr. Comstock into the pit.

SPLASH!

You head off across the desert as quickly as you can. You hear Dr. Comstock sputtering behind you. Forget that wacko, you think.

You glance up. The black cloud turns white. It stops raining.

The hot sun dries you off. You spot a hill in the distance. Maybe if you climb it you can figure out where you are.

“Good luck with your experiment,” you tell Dr. Comstock. “But I’ve got to get going.”

“Please wait!” he cries.

“Sorry,” you reply. Dr. Comstock seems too weird. Besides, you have to defeat the Cave Spirit. You can’t be sidetracked by strange scientists.

You head across the desert toward the distant mountains. You’re pretty sure Dennis’s house is near them. But no matter how far you walk, they don’t seem to get any closer. Are you even going in the right direction?

You spot a tall hill up ahead. Maybe you should climb it and look around. Maybe you’ll find a landmark you recognize.

“Cool!” you exclaim. You feel as if you’re floating on a cloud!

The butterflies head for a mountaintop. They set you gently down on the ground.

You glance around. The trees and bushes are all covered with huge white papery tubes. You’ve never seen anything like them.

“Where am I?” you wonder aloud.

“You’re in the Land of the Butterfly,” replies a high, tinkly voice. You spin around and gasp. A big orange butterfly hovers above you. But the butterfly is as big as you are! And it speaks!

“Wh-wh-who are you?” you sputter.

“I’m the Queen of the Butterflies,” the creature answers. “Once I was human like you. But then I was brought to this place and changed into the beautiful creature you see now.”

You have to admit she’s very beautiful. But she also gives you the creeps.

“Listen, thanks a lot for rescuing me, but I have to get home,” you tell her. “Can you point me in the right direction?”

“You’re home now,” the butterfly queen states. “No human ever leaves this place. Except to fly off in search of nectar.”

A shiver crawls down your back. You gaze at the white tubes hanging from the trees again. You think you understand what’s going on — and it makes you want to scream!

“ARRRRROOOOOWWW!” the bear cries. It charges!

You duck and roll out toward the cave entrance. The bear leaps at you again. But the sound of the spear has it so crazed, it flies over you. Right out the cave entrance. The bear’s momentum carries it over the ledge. It falls to the bottom of the canyon.

The ground shakes as the bear lands.

You creep outside and peer over the ledge. Down below you see the still form of the bear lying on the ground.

You gasp as you watch the bear dissolve into a green mist. The mist rises up and into the cave.

The green mist swirls over the broken pieces of the animal skull. Your eyes widen as the pieces lift off the ground. They hover over the stone altar — and put themselves back together! The skull lands back in its original place on the altar.

“Congratulations, hunter,” a familiar voice says. You glance up. It’s the old shaman. “You are the first person in a thousand years to defeat the Cave Spirit. You made wise use of your weapons. You are free now. Free to continue your mighty hunt.”

“Thanks!” you cry. You step out of the cave into the bright sunlight.

You like the idea of continuing to be a hunter. But for now — the only thing you feel like doing is going home and hunting up a snack.

THE END

You can't get air. You claw at your neck. You try to tug the choking sparks away. But you can't grasp them. They pass through your fingers like grains of sand.

The magical collar tightens. Black spots appear before your eyes. You feel yourself losing consciousness.

And then the sparks vanish.

You open your mouth and breathe in deep gulps of air. After a few moments, you feel normal again.

"I wanted you to have a taste of my power," the Cave Spirit tells you. "But I am not unfair. I relish a good fight. Therefore, I will give you two challenges. If you are able to meet them both, I will let you go free."

You are terrified to find out what kind of challenges the Cave Spirit will come up with. "What if I refuse?" you ask.

"Then I will destroy you right now," he replies.

You gaze at the Cave Spirit, thinking. You know how powerful he is. But what if you catch him by surprise? He isn't expecting you to jump him. The hill is extremely steep. Maybe you can push him off.

Or maybe you'll have better luck with the challenges.

*Take the Cave Spirit by surprise on PAGE 83.
Or face the challenges on PAGE 122.*

You raise the Ice Rifle to your shoulder. It's heavy, and you have trouble steadying it. You aim — and pull the trigger.

PLINGGGGGGGG!

The lion leaps to the other side of the attic. It darts behind a pile of boxes. Your bullet hits an old trunk. Instantly, the trunk turns white with ice.

Awesome! you think. It really works! More confident now, you cross the attic toward the pile of boxes. You hear the mountain lion growling.

“Give up, Cave Spirit!” you shout. “There’s no way you can escape!” You creep closer to the boxes. Your finger is poised on the trigger. You’re ready to shoot as soon as the big cat —

WHAM! The lion explodes out from behind the boxes, knocking them everywhere. Startled, you fall to the floor. Your finger squeezes the trigger. The gun drops down beside you as it fires.

PINGGGGGG! PINGGGGGG! PINGGGGGGGG!

You grasp the Flaming Arrow, aim it at the dog, and let it fly.

Oh, no!

You missed! The Doberman attacks!

You're knocked down by ninety pounds of fierce, growling muscle.

You smell smoke. You glance up to see that the arrow has set a tree on fire. The fire leaps to another tree, and then another.

You scramble away. But the dog leaps at you. It shoves you — right into a blazing bush!

“Aaaaahhh!” you shriek as your clothing ignites.

In the distance you can hear the high-pitched sirens of fire engines.

Too bad they won't arrive in time to help you.

Oh, well. It looks as if this adventure has become too hot for you to handle. Your career as a hunter has gone up in smoke!

THE END

You decide to keep going. What would you find in a ghost town? Ghosts? Certainly no cold sodas. No phones.

Besides, you have a Cave Spirit to fight.

But where is it?

Scrub and cactuses surround you. The heat is unbearable. You hope it doesn't melt your talismans! You pat your pockets. Still there!

Hey — is that a person up ahead? You shade your eyes with your hands. Could it be . . . ? Or is the sun playing tricks on you?

“Hey, there!” the person calls. “Hurry up! I’ve been waiting for you!”

Huh?

Well, it must be a person. But what could he mean — that he has been waiting for you? Could he be the Cave Spirit?

This is the battle you’ve been waiting for.

You jog over to the man.

You hope the mountain lion manages to reach safety. But you're not going to let that fierce creature share your log! It tried to eat you! You watch as it disappears into the white water.

After a few minutes the rapids slow down. You scan the bank for a place to get out of the river. You spot a low bank up ahead. You jump off the log and wade toward it.

But before you've reached the bank, a swift current pulls you down. Down — and into a hole in the bottom of the river!

Your heart pounds in terror as you swirl around and around. You feel as if you're being sucked down a drain.

Suddenly, you're falling through air!

A moment later you land — hard! — on something soft and wet.

You open your eyes and glance up. You're lying in a puddle of mud. Surrounding you are people dressed in old-fashioned clothes. A man in a khaki explorer's suit leans down and gives you a hand.

"Welcome," he says. "You're our first visitor in over a hundred years!"

The Seeker's Sword has served you well in this adventure. You draw it and step toward the bear.

"AROOWWLLL!" the bear growls. It bounds across the cave. You can't believe it moves so fast! You stab at it with your sword. You try to touch the point of the sword to the bear's skin.

But the bear is quick! It ducks — then with a mighty swipe it knocks the sword out of your hands.

There isn't time to draw another weapon. Your heart pounds furiously as you run out of the cave. The bear follows!

Your lungs bursting, you race along the ledge. Up ahead you see a tree. If only you can reach it in time.

The bear is so close you can feel its hot breath on your back. You reach the tree. You jump for a branch. You pull yourself up and begin to climb up the trunk, as quickly as you can.

The tree begins to shake. You glance down.

Oh, no! The bear is climbing after you.

Duh! How could you forget that bears can climb trees?

You've reached the top of the tree. The bear is just a few feet below you. Still climbing.

In terror, you shut your eyes.

The brontosaurus twists its long neck to gaze at you. But the dinosaur doesn't seem to mind having a rider. It goes back to eating.

The dinosaur continues to grow. Soon the beast's head passes through the top of the tree.

Then — *THWUMP! THWUMP!* — the brontosaurus begins to move. The ground shakes with each step. You figure it's going in search of tastier leaves. Or taller trees.

One problem. How do you steer a brontosaurus?

"CAW! CAW!" You see the pterosaur perched in a tree up ahead. The Singing Spear swoops around it. "CAW! CAW! CAW!"

The brontosaurus glances at the pterosaur. It seems attracted by the sound.

THWUMP! THWUMP! The brontosaurus lumbers toward the pterosaur. You manage to steady yourself atop the mighty creature. You put your hand on a weapon. Getting ready.

Closer. Closer . . .

You're in firing range. The pterosaur is so distracted by the Singing Spear it pays no attention to you or the brontosaurus.

Then the brontosaurus begins trembling beneath you. What's going on?

Below is a picture of the thing that is moving toward you. But it is completely hidden in the sandstorm. To make it visible, choose either stars or circles. Then fill in all the squares that contain the symbol you have chosen. Ignore all the squares that contain an s (for sand). If you fill in the correct squares, they will lead you to safety.

[illegible]

*Is it a camel? Go on to PAGE 45.
Or is it a Jeep? PAGE 131.*

You hurry down the mountain, back to your cousins' house. You find Dennis and his sister, Nancy, waiting for you.

"You missed all the fun," Nancy tells you. "Grandmother was here. She brought us all presents. She gave me a stuffed gorilla."

Proudly, Nancy shows you her new toy.

"She got me a boom box," Dennis adds, grinning. "I can't wait to blast everyone in the neighborhood."

"Your present is over there," Nancy tells you, pointing.

You head for a big box on the dining room table. You pick it up and pull off the wrapping.

When you see what the box contains, you don't know whether to laugh or scream.

The label says: CREATE MYSTICAL ILLUSIONS WITH THE SUPER-DELUXE YOUNG PERSON'S MAGIC AND SPELL KIT.

THE END

“I’ll face your challenges,” you tell the Cave Spirit. You speak very loudly, trying to mask the fear in your voice.

“Brave child,” he replies. “Just keep in mind that no one has ever beaten me.”

“I’m ready,” you declare.

“The first challenge is a test of cleverness,” the Cave Spirit explains. “I will place you in a situation of terrible danger. You must find your way out.”

“No problem!” You hope you sound more confident than you feel.

The Cave Spirit laughs. “As you’ll soon see, it will be a very *big* problem!”

With a bright flash of blue light, the Cave Spirit disappears. Once again you’re alone in the desert.

You scan the area. You don’t see any scary enemies. You don’t notice any hidden dangers.

What could the Cave Spirit have meant? Maybe, you think, the challenge is to get home through the hot desert.

You glance around. You recognize the mountain near your cousin’s home. You start jogging toward the mountain.

Then you hear an earsplitting howl. You glance up.

Something that looks like a huge brown wall slowly moves toward you.

“Now you must battle me one-on-one,” the Cave Spirit declares. “My magic against your magic. You may choose your favorite spell — or you may face the challenge with a wand if you still have one.”

He smiles down at you. His glittering eyes send shivers along your spine.

“Think it over carefully,” he continues. Then he stands straight up and bellows into the desert sky. “Then let the battle of magic begin!”

Gulp. The time has come, spellcaster. How will you face this challenge?

Do you have the Wizard's Wand? Use it on PAGE 52.

Or pick your favorite spell and turn to PAGE 128.

“It is time for your magical journey to begin,” the shaman declares. “Remember that each spell can be dangerous. If you use it incorrectly it could be turned against you. Now choose!”

Choose your three spells, spellcaster. Write them down in the list below. If you lose or destroy a talisman, you must cross it off the list!

1. Wizard's Wand

2.

3.

4.

You pick up your two talismans. The purple fog disappears. So does the shaman. For a moment you wonder if you dreamed the whole thing. But the Wizard's Wand tingling in your hand proves you didn't. It was real. And you really have to battle an ancient spirit.

You stick the talismans in your pocket and the wand in your belt. You head down the trail, feeling dazed. Dennis is waiting at the bottom.

"You took long enough," he complains. "I'm hot. Let's go swimming."

"No. I can't swim," you remind him. "Besides, I thought you didn't want to hang out with me."

"What do you mean, no?" he demands. He takes a step toward you. He clenches his fist as if he's going to hit you.

You take off running. He dashes after you. The two of you race back to Dennis's house. You speed through the door and up to your room. Luckily, you are a fast runner.

Not fast enough! You hear his footsteps pounding on the stairs.

You yank open the closet door to hide. Instead, you scream.

You pull the Singing Spear from your belt. But before you can use it, a giant cat pounces! It knocks your weapon from your hands.

You drop to the ground and roll out of the way. You have to protect yourself!

You grab a garbage can lid. It's not much of a shield, but it's better than nothing.

The mountain lion leaps.

CLANG! SCRITCH! Its sharp claws rake the lid out of your hands. You fall backwards. The cat backs up too, startled by the noise. It growls, then prepares to spring again.

Desperately, you glance around for a place to hide. You spot an old standing mirror. You race across the attic. You duck behind the mirror. The cat bounds toward you. Then it stops. It begins growling.

You peek around the mirror. You discover the cat staring into the mirror. Its fur stands on end. The dark tip of its tawny tail twitches.

It must think it sees another cat!

This is your chance to get away.

But the door is locked. Where can you go?

“Are you the one who hurt my prize attack dog?” A fat man waddles toward you. His face is bright red with anger. The Doberman trots beside him. When the dog sees you, it whines and hides behind the man.

“Look at this!” the man exclaims. “Brutus is ruined! He’s afraid of his shadow now!”

“Your dog attacked me!” you protest. “All I did was defend myself!”

“Oh, yeah?” The man points at the weapons hanging from your belt. “I suppose those weapons are only for defense? I think the police would be interested in taking a look at those!”

Uh-oh. You don’t want to try to explain magical weapons to the police. You gaze at the man. He looks too fat to run quickly.

“Well, got to go!” You take off for the other side of the park.

“Hey!” the man shouts.

You glance back. Just as you expected, he can’t keep up. And you can get back to tracking down the Cave Spirit.

You jump when someone tugs your sleeve.

You reach in your pocket and pull out the talisman for your favorite spell. You hold it tightly in your hand.

The Cave Spirit faces you. His face is twisted in a hideous grin. He waves his arms in the air. "ABRACADABRA!" he shouts. Purple sparks fly from his fingertips.

You shout the words to your spell. But instead of your spell taking place, yellow sparks fly from *your* fingertips!

Wow! You can't believe it. That's never happened before.

You watch in astonishment as your yellow sparks and the Cave Spirit's purple sparks swirl together in a whirlwind of magical power. You're amazed to discover that your yellow sparks outnumber the Cave Spirit's purple sparks.

You wave your arms. More magic sparks fly from your fingertips. The sparks tingle as they leave your fingers.

The Cave Spirit stares at you in horror. "Oh, no!" he cries. "It's finally happened!"

"What's happened?" you ask.

"Your magic talismans have made you powerful," he replies. "More powerful than me. According to the legends, we must now trade places!"

You reach for your remaining weapon. You shiver from the cold. You can see your breath in the frigid air.

The cold doesn't seem to bother the mountain lion at all.

It springs.

You try to grasp your weapon. But your hands are stiff with cold. Useless. The weapon falls through your frozen fingers.

WHUMP! The mountain lion lands on you.

"No!" you shriek. You kick at the beast. You twist in its grip. But you can't get away.

Then — you spot something out of the corner of your eye. Your last remaining ice bullet. Maybe you can freeze the cat with it! You wrestle a hand free.

You grab the bullet.

Instantly, your hand goes numb. Your entire body shudders as you freeze solid.

Duh.

Luckily, you scarcely feel anything when the mountain lion takes its first bite. Oh, well, hunter. This time you've been left out in the cold — for good. Or bad . . .

THE END

“Run! Quick!” Professor Greenwell pulls you toward a nearby pile of rocks. You and the others duck down behind the rocks.

You peer out to see what scared everyone. You gasp when you notice a huge animal marching toward you. It looks like an elephant, but it’s much bigger. Its curved tusks are ten feet long and razor sharp. Its long trunk looks like a giant snake. Its thick hide is covered with long, stringy hair.

“That is a mastodon,” the professor whispers. “It has been extinct in the outside world for thousands of years. It guards the other exit from this place. For one hundred years we have fought it off. But now the mastodon is winning.”

“Why?” you ask. “What’s changed?”

“Our hunter had enchanted weapons that only he could use. The mastodon feared him. But he was accidentally killed a few weeks ago. Now the mastodon is trying to destroy us. We won’t last much longer unless we find another hunter.”

You gaze at the hideous beast and shudder. It is the scariest-looking creature you have ever seen.

But it’s also the key to the only way out of here. You know what you must do.

The thing approaching through the sand is a Jeep. But nobody is driving it! It is being pushed along by the powerful wind.

The Jeep moves very slowly. As it pulls up to you, you jump in. You duck down on the floor. But there is very little protection from the sandstorm.

The wind howls even louder. The Jeep picks up speed. You feel it swerving along the desert, moving faster and faster.

You climb into the driver's seat and peer through the windshield. But you can't see anything through the thick, blowing dust.

Then, up ahead, you spot a dark shape. The Jeep speeds toward it, faster and faster.

The sand parts for a few seconds. Oh, no! The Jeep is headed straight for a solid wall of rock! You grab the steering wheel. You try to turn the Jeep away from the rocks. But the steering wheel is clogged by the sand. It won't move at all.

You try the brakes. The pedal goes all the way to the floor. Useless.

Maybe you can jump from the Jeep. Maybe you can —

CRASH!

Maybe nothing. Face it — this is

THE END.

“Change places?” you repeat. “What do you mean?”

“I will become you. You will become me — an all-powerful, evil spirit!”

“Wait!” you cry. “I don’t want —”

But a rolling boom of thunder cuts off your words.

KABOOOOOOM!

You feel your body changing. You grow taller and thicker. You feel magic tingling all through your body. Like an electric current.

Suddenly you are looking down at a kid. The kid looks a lot like you. In fact, the kid *is* you.

And you are a strong, tall, powerful Cave Spirit.

The former Cave Spirit gapes at you, then runs away.

“Wait!” you call. “Come back!”

But the kid is gone. You find yourself thinking of the evil things you’ll do when you catch the kid. You think of all the evil spells you can cast.

What a surprise, you think. You never expected to come to such a BAD

END.

You take a deep breath and face the professor. “I am a hunter,” you declare.

“You?” the professor gasps. “But you’re so young!”

“I’m still a hunter,” you insist. “I was turned into one by a shaman. The only problem is that I’ve lost all my weapons.”

“Maybe you’ll be able to use our hunter’s weapons.” Professor Greenwell’s eyes light up. “He left two behind. None of us has been able to make them work.”

A woman in a long dress digs beneath the pile of rocks. “These are the hunter’s weapons,” she says. She holds up a big stone axe. “This is the Avenger’s Axe. One blow to the head will render the mastodon unconscious for up to an hour. The other weapon” — she holds up a small pocket knife — “is the Nasty Knife. The hunter never told us how it worked, but the mastodon is terrified of it.”

Your heart clutches as the mastodon bellows. The ground shakes as the beast stamps its huge feet.

“Oh, no!” Professor Greenwell cries. “You must choose a weapon immediately! The mastodon is about to attack!”

Battle the mastodon with the Avenger’s Axe on PAGE 32.

Or use the Nasty Knife on PAGE 62.

“The insects on the wall of the cave were caterpillars and butterflies!” you exclaim.

Dr. Comstock scowls, but he doesn’t respond.

You’re sure it’s the right answer. So you’ll just ask for help. “Caterpillars and butterflies! Come help me!” you cry.

The air begins to buzz. The sky goes dark. Thousands of butterflies fly toward you. The sides of the sandpit turn black as hordes of caterpillars crawl down toward you.

You’re grossed out. But you’re also fascinated.

The butterflies and caterpillars attack the scorpions and tarantulas. A hideous buzzing and humming fills the air.

You watch, horrified, as the insects fight one another. Legs and antennae and stingers fly through the air. You can’t tell who is winning. All you know is that you’re surrounded by millions of angry, battling bugs.

Then — abruptly — everything is still.

You gaze down at the ground. It’s covered with the bodies of dead tarantulas and scorpions.

Suddenly, thousands of butterflies gather underneath you. “What’s going on?” you demand. Their fluttering wings tickle.

The butterflies lift you into the air. You rise up from the sandpit to the desert. Then into the clear blue sky!

You're not as experienced a spellcaster as the Cave Spirit. You can feel yourself tiring. It's now or never.

You take a deep breath. You focus all your concentration. You point the wand at the Cave Spirit.

A huge bolt of yellow energy flies out of the tip of the wand. It meets the Cave Spirit's blue sparks. The blue sparks bounce back onto the Cave Spirit.

"YOW!" he exclaims. You smell an electrical fire. It's working!

The Cave Spirit looks frightened. He backs up. You pursue him, holding the wand in front of you.

"Stop!" the Cave Spirit calls. "No! You win!"

But you know better than to trust him. You send one final bolt of yellow energy at the Cave Spirit. He shrieks in fear.

The air fills with a green fog. For a moment you can't see anything. When the fog clears, you and the Cave Spirit are back in the cave. The Cave Spirit stands trapped in your yellow energy bolt.

The broken skull lies on the ground around you. As you watch, the pieces move toward one another and join together. The Cave Spirit dissolves into blue mist. The mist disappears into the skull.

Then you hear the shaman's voice echoing throughout the cave. "Well done, spellcaster," the voice booms.

It's all over. You've defeated the Cave Spirit!

“Get me out of here!” you scream from inside the dinosaur’s mouth.

The creature doesn’t swallow you. Instead, it sets you very gently on the back of its tongue.

You think you understand what it’s up to.

Slowly, it bends over and opens its mouth.

You feel yourself sliding along the leathery tongue and out of the dinosaur’s mouth. Again.

Again you’re falling, falling toward the hard, hard ground.

You pull out the Sticky Net. Holding tight to one end, you throw the other.

You break your fall just before you hit the grass.

The people watching all applaud and laugh.

The pterosaur bows. You give a little wave.

This isn’t the ending you were looking for.

You’re no longer a mighty hunter.

Instead, you’re at the mercy of a stagestruck flying dinosaur.

But, hey, you always wanted to be in show business.

THE END

About R.L. Stine

R.L. Stine is the most popular author in America. He is the creator of the *Goosebumps*, *Give Yourself Goosebumps*, *Fear Street*, and *Ghosts of Fear Street* series, among other popular books. He has written over 250 scary novels for kids. Bob lives in New York City with his wife, Jane, teenage son, Matt, and dog, Nadine.

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